

University of Dundee

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

**The Braided Way**  
**Deep Democracy and Community**

Emslie, Gillian

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*Deep Democracy and Community*

Gillian Emslie

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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

# The Braided Way

*Deep Democracy and Community*

Gillian Emslie

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of  
Philosophy (PhD) in Design

**Centre for the Study of Natural Design**

Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art and Design

**University of Dundee**

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Note: I have changed most of the personal names in this study, in order to protect privacy.

## **Declaration**

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This dissertation is my own work and contains nothing, which is the outcome of work done in collaboration with others, except as specified in the text and Acknowledgments. It has not been previously submitted, in part or whole, to any university or institution for any degree, diploma or other qualification.

I give consent for the dissertation title and summary to be made publically available.

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Gill Emslie

Findhorn, April 2014

## Abstract/Summary

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This study uses *Processwork* as a lens to evaluate the facilitation of social change and related design projects at all levels of scale. Social change processes are deconstructed and explored in terms of awareness of signals, roles, dimensions of rank and power, belief systems, and phenomenological experience within the analytical structure of deep democracy and eldership. Data is collected for the case studies from workshops, interviews with practitioners and participants, relevant texts and field experiences.

*The Bolivian case studies* involved 24 rural indigenous farmers (men of varying ages) and 16 women (aged 16 - 54), all from situations of extreme urban poverty and shows the application of Processwork in empowering participants to facilitate social change.

*The Zaragoza case study* was a part-time multi-module two-year course involving 38 male and female lawyers. They gained the confidence to design, and in some cases implement, a parallel mediation training, based on a whole systems design.

*The Thai case study* consisted of 3 week-long workshops with Buddhist monks and nuns, university professors, community leader, consultants and trainers. The results suggest the emphasis on eldership, group process structure, rank, power, and double signals was extremely useful, even for those already experienced in awareness-based practices.

*The Ecovillage case study* focuses on one female facilitator working in an extremely diverse cultural setting and demonstrates the importance of working with inner diversity and the value of both inner and outer awareness Processwork exercises.

*In choosing this broad spectrum of applications*, the similarities and differences of Processwork in diverse cultural and social contexts is illustrated. The case studies and my experience suggest that Processwork can contribute to a shift in perspective required to build a more sustainable civilization with its capacity to broaden perspective and increase awareness at the worldview level. Processwork facilitates a process of meta-design, that encourages participants to see the larger, complex context of their projects as well as the details and momentary interactions and can be very helpful to all those working with complex systems, including facilitators and designers.

## Auto-biographical Note

---

At a recent family gathering, my mother was reflecting on the differences between her four children and how these showed up in the very early years. Her comparison between my younger sister and me was perhaps the most marked. As soon as I could walk, I was exploring the further reaches of the playpen, the balcony and the yard, and had to be *kept an eye on* to make sure I did not fall down the stairs or get into any serious mishaps. My younger sister, in contrast, was happy to sit placidly playing with her toys in the middle of the play area without being the least bit interested in neither potentially falling down the stairs nor particularly challenging any of the constraints around her.

It would seem that I have always been interested in the further reaches of my environment, the context I find myself in, the rules that govern it, the rule-makers, who and what gets included in the design and decision-making processes and long-term consequences. I found myself, from a very young age, questioning the rationale, insight and wisdom of the system I was being educated in. Having survived high school, I dropped out of college and found myself travelling to South America.

The mythic roots and initial seeding of my interest in this research area began during this time. When living in remote regions of South America I began to see the stark contrasts between old growth tropical rainforest and its incredible life giving diversity including the flora and fauna it housed, and the huge, clear cut regions of the Brazilian interior, already desert, and abandoned for the next lush, short term section of money making hard wood and temporary grazing areas. This, along with meeting people who had suffered multiple human rights violations under despotic regimes brought into sharp focus the realisation that a shift in perspective was needed on a large scale if we were not to squander the beautiful natural and human resources we have been so fortunate to inherit.

During these years I acquired a tacit knowledge of traditional community, its beauty and its challenges. This stimulated my interest in researching what tools and perspectives might be helpful in empowering these, and similar communities in light of the increasing changes we are experiencing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. When I returned to Scotland this interest led me to the Findhorn Foundation Community in Moray. I have been based here ever since. The Findhorn



Foundation is an ecovillage and non-governmental organisation associated with the United Nations, where it contributes primarily in the areas of education, sustainability and values.

During my time fulfilling various roles within the organisation ranging from gardener and mother to workshop leader and manager, I had the opportunity to attend several Processwork workshops. The shift in perspective that I experienced during these workshops was hugely appealing, broadening my perspective and deepening my understanding of complex personal, relationship, group and world dynamics, that troubled me deeply at the time.

My initial interest was sparked by a need for additional tools to address both the internal and external conflicts I was experiencing at that time in my life. I faced a difficulty in transitioning away from my life in the depths of the more remote regions of the South American rainforest. Life was in many ways simple there, at times harsh, but often beautiful in its simplicity and closeness to the land, and returning to Europe with its complexity, opportunity and strongly financially driven economy threw me into a kind of crisis of identity. I no longer knew who I was before I left to travel, and did not yet know who I had become. I felt that I carried an incredibly precious jewel on the inside from the experience of those last few years, and yet most people I met did not seem to understand nor be particularly interested in my experience, which I struggled to communicate with words. With no money to return to South America and my beloved friends and family there, I felt strangely isolated and lost in my own homeland, struggling to find to make sense of my own experience as I formed new relationships and became a mother, I struggled with my self-confidence and old ghosts from the past challenging me to settle down, get a job, to be responsible, rattled around in my head pulling me this way and that.

The transpersonal or spiritual perspective along with the emphasis on co-creation with nature, and the interconnected worldviews that I found in the Findhorn Foundation community and eco-village, and later Processwork with its multi-dimensional framework provided me with tools and perspective to understand what was 'happening to me', how to make sense of it, and ways to work with both the internal and external chaos I experienced. Throughout this period, what also kept me 'sane', were my early morning walks where I would sit outside as the dawn broke and the sun rose. Sometimes I would play my bamboo

flute, and for a few minutes each day I would again feel that connection. It was the same connection that had grown in me so strongly during my years in South America where I would just 'be', feeling connected to that intangible something that I first met many years before, at dawn in the Arizona desert, where I realised that all of life is part of an interconnected whole, regarded by many as sacred.

I went on to study Processwork, first informally and then as a part time student for eight years, initially through the Processwork Institute in Portland, Oregon, and later transferred to the UK-based Research Society of Process Orientated Psychology, where I completed a Diploma in Process Orientated Psychology, (often known as Processwork), which is an MA equivalent level of study. A little like getting a driving licence, it took several more years of experience to develop the skills I needed to really make a difference both in terms of facilitating my own internal diversity issues, as well as facilitating the diversity issues that I was called to facilitate with my clients, individuals, groups and organisations. I can now see that this is really a lifelong learning journey and on-going interest in deepening my skills as a Process orientated facilitator is partly what stimulated my interest in doing this research.

The framework and perspective of deep democracy has provided me with a structure and language to bridge the worlds between my deepest experiences, my internal more emotional response from moment to moment, and the external 'reality', of things such as time, money, structure, bricks and mortar and climate change. I have also experienced this framework and perspective as being helpful to many others that I have had the opportunity to work with in very different cultural settings.

While my roots and family in Scotland are very important to me, I also continue to have a great love for the more remote regions of the Earth. The diversity, raw beauty and immediacy of life and nature is very striking and evokes in me a deep yearning to support and protect the flourishing of these precious cultures and the wellbeing of their ecology.

Another reason I like working with people who are still close to their traditional life styles is because I know that some of them remember how to listen deeply with all their senses and trust in the earth intelligence that has been around for so much longer than any of us. That perspective informs many of their directions and decisions in life. In this area and so many others – I learn from them.

I am reminded of how to sense the life force and natural intelligence or *spirits* in the stones and the rivers, in the mountains and the clouds, in the plants, trees and wind patterns, and the rising and setting sun, changing seasons and the directional pulls to the north, south, east and west, none of which are controlled by international borders or political systems, nor are they economically or fear driven. They simply seem to be, and know how to continue to grow, in a constant cycle of life and death, beginnings and endings and yet have an eternal quality that seems to permeate beyond physical form. I have heard it said that birth and death are made of the same fabric and that love transcends even death.

Sharing some of those experiences myself has been very profound, and has moved, humbled and motivated me, in such a way that I am convinced that the ability to include this perspective is an essential component in creating a more sustainable world.

## Preface

---

This research is based on the assumption that all life is interconnected and that human beings are an integral part of a living system, not merely observers and users of it. The emphasis on interconnection, and the importance of the flow of information and feedback between the parts, refers not only to physical phenomena but also to the intra, inter and collective psychic or subjective phenomenon that we experience. It also touches on the intangible, ineffable, noetic and numinous experiences, which on one hand, are impossible to measure or prove, though on the other hand they provide a deep sense of meaning, purpose and connection to the sense that we are part of something greater than ourselves that often fills us with awe and reverence. It is not within the remit of this work to engage deeply with this starting point, however, it is the firmly held view of the author and also the theoretical basis of many holistic disciplines.

This same assumption about the central importance of an interconnected worldview informs my interest in Natural Design and the need for the design of interventions based on a holistic or interconnected worldview, if we are to pursue a sustainable, safe and just world for all. My interest in Natural Design<sup>1</sup> processes arose during my time of living in the rainforest. The complexity and intricacy of nature, and the incredible resilience it demonstrates in its ability to adapt to continuously changing conditions made me realise that the inherent intelligence within nature is a model for design that we as a human species could usefully learn from. Given the human species is an integral part of nature itself we all have access to this source of emergent wisdom.

This research assumes that design is not accidental, but something that we as human beings set out to do intentionally. This intention is informed by worldviews, conscious and unconscious, that influence our perception, and often dictate the decisions we make, both related to design and in other areas of our lives. Through my research I hope to make explicit this relationship as an aid for all those who work with design in all its dimensions.

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<sup>1</sup> Natural Design..... a holistic approach to design.

One of the central features of Natural Design is its holistic emphasis. In Natural Design theory and practice, the designer is considered part of the system, which he or she is designing. As a result the designer function is embedded in the system and not separate from it. This in turn informs an embedded worldview which is shared by all disciplines which make use of whole systems perspectives. As the designer, facilitator or observer is part of the system they are consequently influenced by the system, and the system influences them. This concept is illustrated in figure 30.

In spite of the empirical evidence suggesting that for long-term sustainability human design must contribute to systemic health across all scales and integrate into natural processes if we are to avoid causing ever increasing social and ecological degradation, this realisation does not seem to have informed curriculum development in many disciplines including that of Design, and indeed many facilitator trainings where the internal experience of the facilitator is dismissed as a distraction, rather than a valuable source of information about the field or situation that they are in the process of facilitating or attempting to bring additional awareness to.

I view Processwork, as an approach, which can support practical application of the whole systems perspective of Natural Design. My overall aim is that my research illustrating the practical use of Processwork with its multi-dimensional philosophical framework of deep democracy and braided methodology, will make a contribution to the on-going research and practise methods of those facilitators and designers (in all disciplines and situations) who are currently striving to embrace an embedded, holistic Natural Design approach in their work. In particular, my purpose is to provide useful information for those who are involved in the design of facilitative interventions in social and ecological contexts where multiple stakeholders, appropriate participation and diversity issues are inevitable components in increasingly complex dialogues.

The three dimensional framework of deep democracy provides a structure and language that bridges the measurable, concrete dimension of reality with the more subjective feeling and relationship dimensions along with the most subtle interconnected non-dual connecting principle (from which we often derive a sense of purpose or meaning). In my professional and personal experience I have observed this framework to be very useful in providing a

structure and language to differentiate between the different dimensions. The title of this thesis, *The Braided Way*, refers to these three dimensions. Often, conflicts do not resolve because there is a confusion of dimensions, somewhat like a tangled, uncombed head of hair, all mixed up in a knot. Once the hair has been combed, and divided into three strands, these strands can be taken one by one, each one giving rise to the next, and together, they form one, differentiated braid. For example one braid the hard facts, the second braid the diversity of feelings about these 'facts', and the third braid the underlying myth or longing that gives rise to the feelings and to the concrete actions. All dimensions need to be addressed in order to have a long-term sustainable outcome. I am particularly interested in raising awareness of what stops us perceiving the existence of these three braids and what shifts when we are able to cultivate a meta-perspective, with an awareness and language that makes available all the information in the system. Why do we so often not perceive our experience from a whole systems perspective when the empirical evidence pointing to this as the context for life is so clear? I suggest that this is an unconscious marginalisation process, which filters out certain perceptions and focuses on others, influenced by our conscious and unconscious worldviews.



**Figure 1: Guatemalan woman's braid & inspiration for the title of this thesis.**

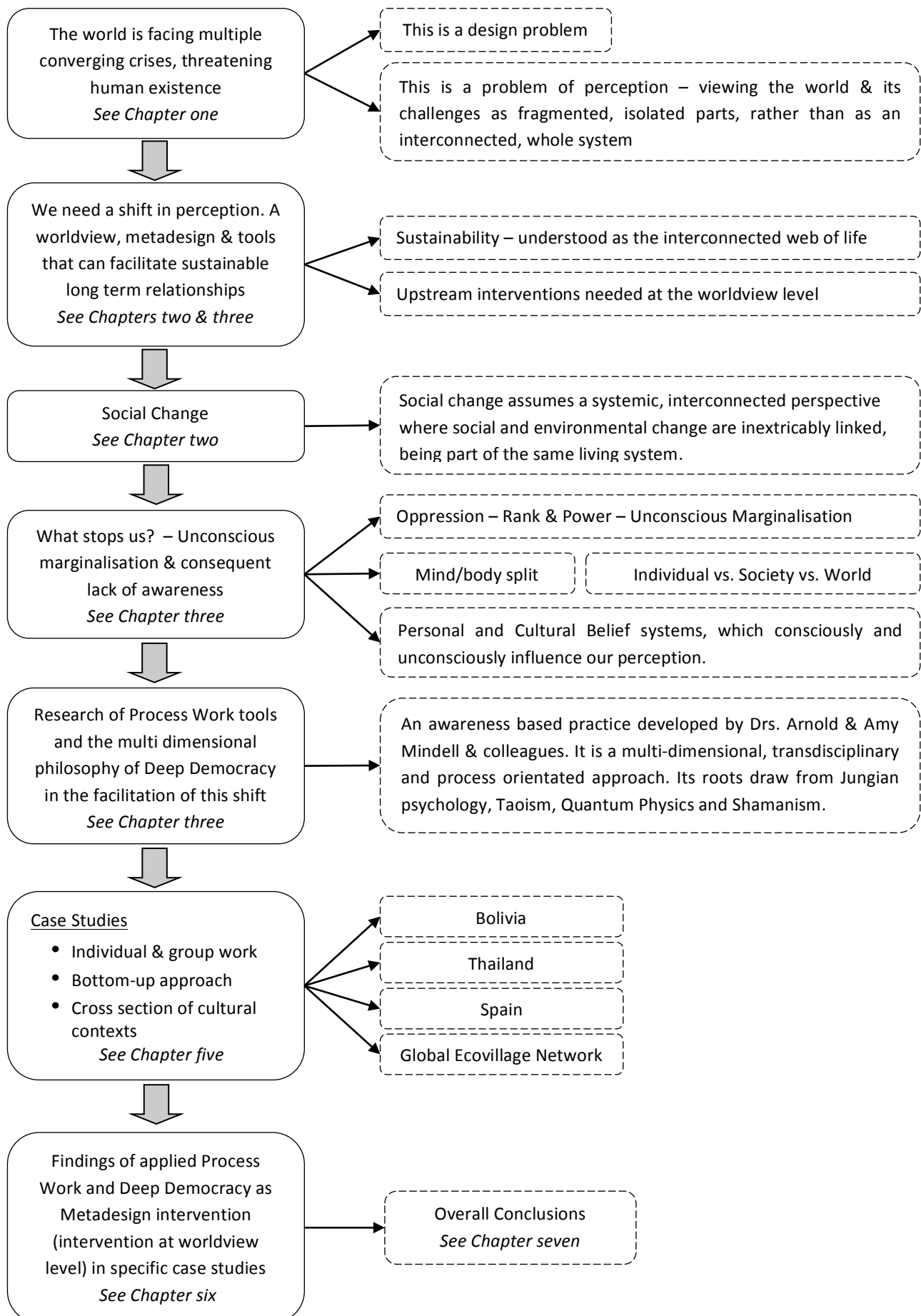


Figure 2: Story Line

## Chapter One: Context & Statement of Problem

---

This introductory chapter outlines and discusses the global ecological and social context in which my research problem is situated. It describes the ecological consequences we are currently seeing as a result of designing our societies based on a fragmented way of thinking/world view and outlines the social relevance of this study from a global perspective. In this chapter I suggest the possibility of using the *braided* methodology as a potentially effective tool for creating perceptual shifts and therefore subsequent social and ecological change.

---

*The Universe is a communion of subjects, not a collection of objects*<sup>2</sup>

*Thomas Berry, 1991*

My research was initiated by a strong emotional involvement with many of the issues that people face on an on-going basis and specifically related to the levels of safety and justice needed for humanity to thrive. Having been a practitioner now for many years I wanted to use this thesis to develop my research structure and at the same time to enable a larger audience to understand the details of how these processes work. I am particularly interested in how this information might support designers, trainers and facilitators of complex social change processes.

Additionally, what I hope to show in this research is how important it is for us all to understand and have the ability to deeply feel that we are an integral part of this biosphere, and to facilitate that *awareness* or *consciousness* to increasingly inform our thoughts, words and actions. From the crises described in Chapter One we can see that when fragmented thinking, designing and breaking things into parts is not used as a useful tool within a wider holistic worldview, but rather as the main criteria for decision-making, all kinds of

---

<sup>2</sup> (Berry, Thomas, 2013)



environmental and social problems ensue. In particular I aim to illustrate the importance of the quality of our relationships with each other, with ourselves and with our environment and how we consequently relate to the current socio-economic, environmental and existential crisis.

In order to contextualize the urgent need for profound long-lasting change, in the following pages I will outline some of the global environmental challenges we are currently facing globally as a society and planet and their link to issues of social justice. Figure 4 illustrates the direct connections between environmental and social factors, which lead either to degradation or health of a system. I suggest both environmental and social degradation are symptoms arising from a fragmented way of thinking which does not take into account the interconnection of all the parts of a system that will be affected by an action.

This research has its main focus on the potential of Processwork and deep democracy as methods of achieving long term sustainable social change through perceptual shift. Social change is intimately and inextricably connected with ecological factors and it is impossible to separate the social dimension from its ecological context.

*Socio-ecosystems, where ecological and social dimensions are interconnected and are either understood from a more anthropocentric perspective as ecosystems services contributing to human wellbeing or alternatively from a more systemic and eco-centric perspective.*<sup>3</sup>

*Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005*

This chapter pays particular attention to some of the ecological crises we are facing in order to provide background on social crises. During the main body of the thesis the focus will be on social factors unless examination of the specific ecological context will deepen the analysis.

There have always been environmental changes on planet Earth, but nowadays changes are increasingly rapid and they are mainly caused by human activity. This is why a new name for the geological era that we are now living in, the Anthropocene, has been suggested.

---

<sup>3</sup> (Ecosystems and Human Well-being:, 2014)

*The scientists emphasize that the rapid expansion of human activities since the industrial revolution has now generated a global geophysical force equivalent to some of the great forces of nature.*

*We are entering the Anthropocene, a new geological era in which our activities are threatening the Earth's capacity to regulate itself. We are beginning to push the planet out of its current stable Holocene state, the warm period that began about 10,000 years ago and during which agriculture and complex societies, including our own, have developed and flourished.<sup>4</sup>*

*Will Steffen, 2013*

In this time of climate chaos, we face situations like the potential collapse of the unlimited growth model that drives the global economy. Donella Meadows and her fellow authors already pointed clearly to this trend in their book *Limits to Growth*<sup>5</sup> which showed clearly from a systemic perspective how if unrestrained, these unsustainable patterns could create chaos on a global scale, seriously damaging the ecosystems and social systems that support life on earth.

Over forty years later, in 2013, there are many examples that clearly illustrate this trend. Water scarcity is perhaps one of the most concerning as 1.2 billion people already live in areas of water scarcity, and another 1.6 billion face economic water shortage. With population growth, climate change and inefficient use of existing resources it is estimated that by 2025, 1.8 billion people will be living with absolute water scarcity.<sup>6</sup> Michael Renner of the authoritative World Watch Institute suggests,

*For reasons that range from warfare and persecution to natural disasters and development projects, an estimated 92.56 million people were forcibly displaced in 2012, either inside their home countries or across a border. Displacement is sometimes temporary, but in other cases it can last for years.<sup>7</sup>*

*Michael Renner, 2013*

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<sup>4</sup> (Rockström, Johan, 2014)

<sup>5</sup> (Meadows, Donella; Meadows, Dennis, Randers, Jorgan, 1974)

<sup>6</sup> (United Nations, 2014)

<sup>7</sup> (Renner, Michael, 2013)

In 2012, Kate Raworth of Oxfam in her report, *A Safe and Just Space for Humanity: Can we live within the doughnut?*<sup>8</sup>, points out that we are currently in breach of eight of the eleven social boundaries required for a safe and just world. These include food, water, equity, resilience and suffrage and, in particular, access to food and gender equality. Raworth argues that any vision of sustainable development for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century must recognise that eradicating poverty and achieving social justice must be addressed within the boundaries of our Earth's ecosystem. (Figure 4 below), places these social boundaries within the context of the planetary boundaries.

The *Planetary Boundaries Situation Diagram* (Figure below) shows that three of these boundaries (climate change, biological diversity and nitrogen input to the biosphere) may already have been transgressed. In addition, it emphasizes that the boundaries are strongly connected — crossing one boundary may seriously threaten the ability to stay within safe levels of the others.<sup>9</sup> The planetary boundaries are described more in detail in Appendix 1.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> (Oxfam, 2014)

<sup>9</sup>Rockström et al. (2009) The boundaries come from empirical evidence. They also explain additionally the social aspect of them: We sought to identify boundary positions beyond which we cannot exclude non-linear changes in one or several sub-systems on Earth. It is up to societies to choose where the boundary position is placed. We chose to place it at the lower end of the uncertainty range in science as a measure of applying a precautionary principle (e.g., for climate change at 350 ppm (CO<sub>2</sub>)). One could also take a more risk prone approach, opting for the higher end of our analysis of uncertainty, in this case at 550 ppm (CO<sub>2</sub>). This is a social choice, but the range is based on an Earth System analysis. (Rockström, Johan , 2009)

<sup>10</sup> The information in Appendix 1 has been extracted from Rockström et al. (2009)<sup>10</sup>; other articles of the Stockholm Resilience Centre; Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (2005); the World Watch Vital Signs and Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Report (IPCC, 2007)<sup>10</sup> and the Gaia Foundation (2012). The table contains both naturally occurring causal factors, such as volcanic eruptions, as well as human behaviours that are contributing to the accelerated change processes that we are currently experiencing, affecting the bio-cultural diversity and long-term sustainability of the planet.

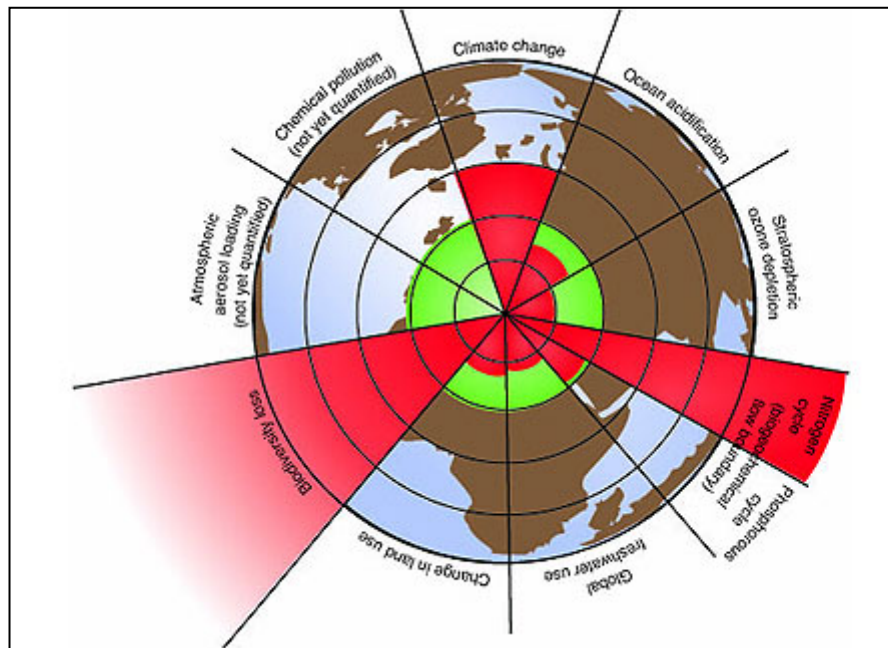


Figure 3: Planetary boundaries situation diagram

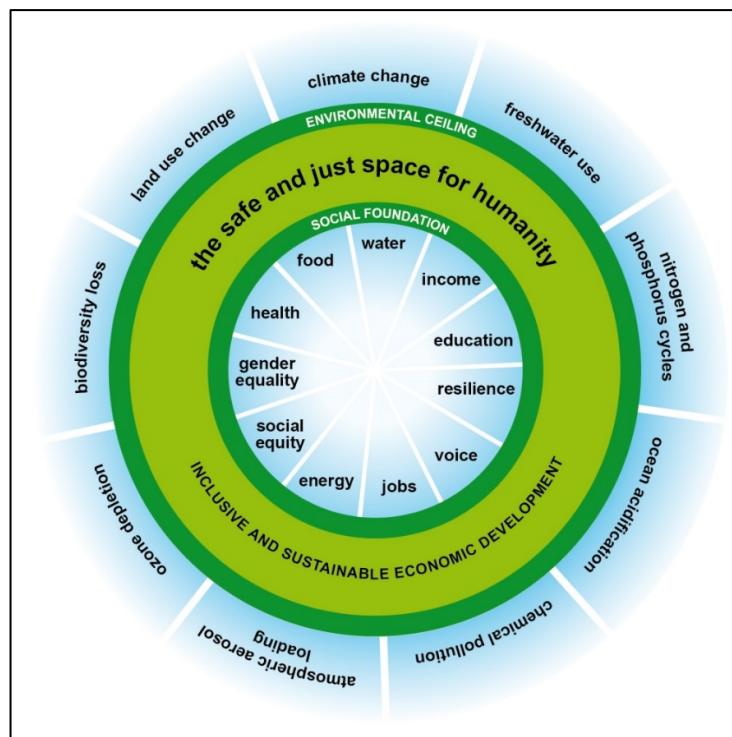


Figure 4: A Safe and Just Space for Humanity to Thrive in

Raworth shows the interdependence of the social and planetary boundaries, and highlights how environmental pressure can aggravate poverty, and vice versa. She suggests that eradicating poverty would not put planetary boundaries under stress. Available data imply that the social foundation could be achieved for every person alive today with strikingly few additional resources.

*Food: Providing the additional calories needed by the 13 per cent of the world's population facing hunger would require just 1 per cent of the current global food supply.*

*Energy: Bringing electricity to the 19 per cent of the world's population who currently lack it could be achieved with less than a 1 per cent increase in global CO2 emissions.*

*Income: Ending income poverty for the 21 per cent of the global population who live on less than \$1.25 a day would require just 0.2 per cent of global income. In fact, the biggest source of planetary-boundary stress today is excessive resource consumption by roughly the wealthiest 10 per cent of the world's population, and the production patterns of the companies producing the goods and services that they buy.<sup>11</sup>*

It should also be noted that in stark contrast to these surprising statistics, the current environmental situation in relationship to the production of carbon emissions, global income levels and nitrogen consumption are the following:

*Carbon: Around 50 per cent of global carbon emissions are generated by just 11 per cent of people;*

*Income: 57 per cent of global income is in the hands of just 10 per cent of people;*

*Nitrogen: 33 per cent of the world's sustainable nitrogen budget is used to produce meat for people in the EU—just 7 per cent of the world's population. Adding to the pressure created by the world's wealthiest consumers is a growing global 'middle class', aspiring to emulate today's high-income lifestyles. By 2030, global demand for water is expected to rise by 30 per cent, and demand for food and energy both by 50 per cent.*

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<sup>11</sup> (ibid.)

*In addition, the inefficiency with which natural resources are currently used to meet human needs—for example through wasted food, leaky irrigation, and fuel-inefficient vehicles—further compounds the pressure.*<sup>12</sup>

This framework brings together human rights and environmental sustainability and reframes sustainable development from this perspective. It poses the question why then, when it seems so clear that our overall, long term sustainability will need to include a focus on the interdependence between our social and environmental wellbeing do we not act collectively in pursuit of this goal.

As illustrated by the information in preceding pages, we can see that we are living in times of a convergence of crises that call for systemic solutions. Human beings have amazing depths of capacity and ingenuity, and I argue that we need to encourage approaches that tap into these inherent resources if we are to aim for a sustainable future, one that embraces the rich bio-cultural diversity that we have inherited. We are urgently in need of new attitudes and ways of thinking and working. The current worldviews, belief systems and consequent attitudes, which dominate our collective approach to life, are based on fragmented and reductionist belief systems and if we are to pursue a long term sustainable future we need a perceptual shift from fragmentation to integration or holism.

I propose that the current lack of social and ecological sustainability and resilience that we are experiencing is essentially a design problem arising from a fragmented worldview. As a consequence the essential emphasis on the importance of relationship or interconnection between the parts of this complex living system is not present. I also suspect that the presence of unconscious internalised belief systems, time-spirits and ghost roles<sup>13</sup> significantly influence the worldviews and perspectives that inform the decisions we make. I imagine that these worldviews often support the status quo, unconsciously marginalising disturbances and experiences that are not in accordance with this and consequently

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<sup>12</sup> (ibid.)

<sup>13</sup> Un-represented role in the system that can be felt in the atmosphere.

inhibiting us from following that deeper sense of direction and choice available both in our own lives and in the world.

This could be one of the reasons that 'business as usual' is predominant in so many situations, in spite of the empirical evidence that indicates radical change is required. Often vested interests in the background influence the media and belief systems that convince so many of us to eat, drink and live in ways that on a deeper level we know is not sustainable, either for our own health, or the health of the planet. This then often leads to humans experiencing symptoms such as addictions and depression.

Deep democracy and its process-orientated tools are helpful, in providing a framework, philosophy and tool kit that facilitates interventions at a worldview level, bringing awareness to the attitudes that we need to address this situation and how to develop skills to address it. Consequently my research will focus largely on the impact of our worldviews, (conscious and unconscious) on our thoughts and actions, and how to bring awareness to these, how to work with internal obstacles, and internalised oppression, and how important it is to include a psychological component in any methodology used to address the attitudes needed at this time in the face of the huge problems that we are facing globally. As Albert Einstein once said in a famous quote:

*We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them.*<sup>14</sup>

As part of the bio-sphere ourselves, it is clear to me that the current trends we are experiencing globally, highlighted in the statistics and information earlier in this chapter, also impact us in terms of our overall sense of wellbeing, including our psychological and physical health. In my view resilience, adaptability and the capacity to live with uncertainty, change and increasing diversity issues, are some of the most needed qualities at this time if we are to strive for a more sustainable future, and strengthen community at all scales.

Daniel Wahl, in his PhD dissertation *Design for Human and Planetary Health*,<sup>15</sup> defines sustainability as an on-going process rather than a fixed state and links design with

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<sup>14</sup> (Einstein, 2014)

intentionality, relationship and health. This highlights the need for a shift in attitude that emphasises on-going learning, and the need for individual and collective capacity to respond to and participate in the changes that we are experiencing currently.

*Design is an expression of intention in and through relationships and interactions. The basic intention behind the sustainability revolution is to provide a meaningful and humane existence for every local and global citizen within the limits set by the natural processes that maintain the health of ecosystems and the biosphere for this and future generations of life on earth... Ultimately, sustainable design has to be health generating, salutogenic design across all scales. The health of human individuals and their communities depends crucially upon the health of the ecosystems, societies and communities in which they participate. Sustainability is not a fixed state to work towards and ultimately achieve, it is rather the continuous process of learning by which local, regional, national and international communities learn to participate appropriately and therefore sustainably in natural process—both at the local and the global scale.<sup>16</sup>*

*Daniel Wahl, 2006*

This design problem includes the visible, tangible and more easily quantifiable parts of the system, but the system also includes more qualitative intangible elements and the interconnections or relationships, which hold the elements together. Whilst it is essential to address the tangible elements of the system, it is clear to me that we must also address the intangible components such as meaning, confidence and intentionality as parts of a whole system approach. One of the strengths of using the proposed *braided* methodology is that it attempts to address and include all aspects and elements present in a system both tangible and intangible and the relationships and connections.

The importance of interconnection or relationship for a sustainable future has deep historical roots and can be found in many ancient texts ranging from Taoism, ancient Sanskrit, creation myths and cross cultural shamanic perspectives to mystical branches of most if not all religions worldwide. It can be found more recently in the work of Jung,

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<sup>15</sup> (Wahl, Design for Human and Planetary Health, 2006)

<sup>16</sup> (Ibid.)



Einstein and Quantum physics, and in many other places including living systems thinking, eco-psychology, deep ecology and the field of *bio-mimetics*.<sup>17</sup>

In the context of global change and human responses, Paul Hawkins in his book *Blessed Unrest* speaks of mutually beneficial self-organising networks informed by the underlying intention to facilitate ecological sustainability and social justice. He describes the hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of individuals working for this common aim around the world. Here too he speaks of the multi-dimensional nature of these relationships.

*What does meet the eye is compelling: coherent, organic, self-organised congregations involving tens of millions of people dedicated to change. When asked at colleges if I am pessimistic or optimistic about the future my answer is always the same. If you look at science that describes what is happening in the world today and aren't pessimistic, you don't have the correct data. If you meet the people in this unnamed movement and aren't optimistic, you haven't got a heart.*<sup>18</sup>

*Paul Hawkins, 2007*

This perspective is also shared by many leading international organisational and leadership consultants like Margaret Wheatley, a pioneer in this field. In *The Promise and Paradox of Community in the Community of the Future*, she reiterates this point, saying that the majority of the breakdowns in today's society are caused by relationship breakdowns and that community is an essential component in building the collaboration that is urgently needed if we are to act with the awareness that all our actions do affect the whole system. She goes on to say that what is most needed is that we listen deeply to each other<sup>19</sup>. I would add that this should be expanded to include listening to and tracking the subtle signals within us and in nature.

Building strong local, regional and global communities, which are able to sustain their existence long term is a challenge involving multiple cultures, worldviews and belief systems. Solving global crises will necessarily involve techniques and methods that are able

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<sup>17</sup> (What is Biomimetics, 2014)

<sup>18</sup> (Hawkins, Paul, 2007, p. 4)

<sup>19</sup> (Wheatley, Margaret J and Kellner-Rogers, Myron, 1998)

to encompass and bridge this huge diversity. Therefore, the organisations and people I have included in my research range from grassroots and indigenous peoples to professional bodies in Europe. The reason I have used such a broad spectrum is to examine the similarities and differences that arise in different cultural contexts with the introduction and application of the multi-dimensional framework and philosophy of deep democracy and a Processwork approach as tools to facilitate awareness of the design shift required.

Even from a reductionist perspective, as scientific evidence mounts, it is increasingly recognized that societies will collapse if they do not address resource and environmental issues. It is clear that the need to facilitate the design of sustainable solutions, which address this complex situation and encompass the interconnected nature of ecological, social, cultural, economic and spiritual aspects, is essential.

*What is sustained in a sustainable community is not economic growth, or development, or competitive advantage. What is sustained is the web of life on which our long-term survival depends. In other words a sustainable community or organisation is designed in such a way that its ways of life, its technologies and social institutions, honour, support and cooperate with nature's inherent ability to sustain life.*<sup>20</sup>

*Fritjof Capra, 2002*

With this view in mind, this study examines the structure and philosophy of deep democracy and a Processwork approach as tools to bring awareness of the shift in perspective required to facilitate interventions that inform our actions on an individual and collective basis from a holistic perspective, or whole systems perspective.

In my research I am particularly interested in facilitating awareness of what stops us perceiving our experience from a whole systems perspective when the empirical evidence pointing to this as the context for life is so clear, and to see more clearly the choices we have available from moment to moment from a multi-dimensional perspective. I examine the unconscious marginalisation processes which filter out certain perceptions and focus on

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<sup>20</sup>(ibid.)

others, often leading to the maintaining of the status quo, whether or not this supports the long term health and wellbeing of the biosphere and those of us within it.

This experience of unconscious marginalisation often seems to be informed by history or conditioned and habitual patterns of thought. Many are strongly influenced by the *zeitgeist* or spirit of the times. One could say that we have an unconscious habit of perceiving our lives and the world from a fragmented, short-term perspective. Often even when we are disturbed by something or pulled by a deeper sense of something intangible for a moment, our rational minds seem to dismiss it as we are confronted by inner and outer belief systems or unconscious habits. I will research how the application of the *braided methodology* can support a deeper connection and awareness of this deeper sense or organising principle that is present in most situations and how to draw on this as a source of direction, and information.

For the purpose of this research, wholeness is understood as the entire living system of the earth, biosphere<sup>21</sup>, or Gaia<sup>22</sup>, and our relationship with it. The Gaia theory formulated by James Lovelock, suggests that all organisms interact with their inorganic surroundings on Earth, forming a self-regulating, complex system that contributes to maintaining the conditions for life on the planet. Lovelock spoke to the need for perspective in order to experience the interconnected nature of this highly diverse living system in his quote below.

*There is nothing unusual in the idea of life on Earth interacting with the air, sea and rocks, but it took a view from outside to glimpse the possibility that this combination might consist of a single giant living system and one with the capacity to keep the Earth always at a state most favourable for the life upon it.*<sup>23</sup>

*James Lovelock, 2000*

Donella Meadows, (1941-2001), a systems analyst and lead author of *Limits to Growth*,<sup>24</sup> and author of the primer *Thinking in Systems*,<sup>25</sup> reiterates the importance of bio cultural

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<sup>21</sup> All the Earth's ecosystems considered as a single, self-sustaining unit. (Dictionary, 2005)

<sup>22</sup> (Lovelock, 1979)

<sup>23</sup> (Lovelock, James, 2000, p. 1)

<sup>24</sup> (Meadows, Donella; Meadows, Dennis, Randers, Jorgan, 1974)

diversity for this self-regulating system to be able to sustain itself in the long term. Given the current trends in today's agriculture, as well as the cultural and social homogenisation that is occurring worldwide together with the global economy that can so easily destroy the precious diversity we must preserve for a sustainable future, Meadows illustrates this point in the quote below.

*When you understand the power of system self-organization, you begin to understand why biologists worship biodiversity even more than economists worship technology. The wildly varied stock of DNA, evolved and accumulated over billions of years, is the source of evolutionary potential, just as science libraries and labs and universities where scientists are trained are the source of technological potential. Allowing species to go extinct is a systems crime, just as randomly eliminating all copies of particular science journals, or particular kinds of scientists, would be.*

*The same could be said of human cultures, of course, which are the store of behavioural repertoires, accumulated over not billions, but hundreds of thousands of years. They are a stock out of which social evolution can arise. Unfortunately, people appreciate the precious evolutionary potential of cultures even less than they understand the preciousness of every genetic variation in the world's ground squirrels. I guess that's because one aspect of almost every culture is the belief in the utter superiority of that culture. Insistence on a single culture shuts down learning. Cuts back resilience. Any system, biological, economic, or social, that becomes so encrusted that it cannot self-evolve, a system that systematically scorns experimentation and wipes out the raw material of innovation, is doomed over the long term on this highly variable planet.<sup>26</sup>*

*Donella Meadows, 1999*

In the light of the evidence described in this chapter, along with my own sense of the need for whole systems, process-orientated interventions that are able to facilitate the interactions between the diverse voices present within every complex system, I feel that deep democracy, its process orientated tools, and its braided methodology has a valuable

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<sup>25</sup> (Meadows, Donella, 2008, p. 163)

<sup>26</sup> (Meadows, Donella, 1999)

contribution to make in a wide range of settings. It can differentiate and frame the different dimensions, or strands of experience making all of the information in the system available, aid seeing the complexity from a meta-perspective through this multi-dimensional lens, and can facilitate the interaction between the diverse voices while assuming the capacity of a system to self-regulate or self-organise in spite of the inevitable chaos that may arise in the midst of any change process. This is very inspiring to me and has been useful in my personal experience so far working with this approach. For this reason, I am inspired to research the application of these frameworks and tools in diverse social and cultural settings, as I sense that they can make a difference in shifting the lenses through which people perceive reality, and consequently empower them to cross their edges, confront their inner and outer critics, and limiting belief systems, and follow their dreams.

This research examines the framework and philosophy of deep democracy with its braided methodology and process-orientated approach as tools to bring awareness in perspective required to design holistic interventions that make use of all the information in the system. My hope is that the metaphor of the braided way made up of interwoven strands comprising parallel worlds will support the theoretical and practical development of holistic education, facilitation and Natural Design in all disciplines. My intention is to cover those aspects of Processwork, which are relevant to this research and yet are only part of a greater body of evolving work being developed by Drs. Arnold and Amy Mindell, and their colleagues around the world.

## **Aims and Objectives of this research:**

This study aims to investigate how Processwork, within the multi-dimensional structure of deep democracy, can contribute to the perceptual shift needed to move from a worldview and consequent actions based on fragmentation, to one that recognises the inherent interconnection and wholeness.

Through the primary research carried out using a combination of case studies, interviews and conversations with a variety of participants in a series of workshops, which I ran between 2009 and 2013, I aim to identify moments where perceptual shift occurred for individuals and groups. I will examine these moments and situations in detail through the

lens of deep democracy with its braided methodology, and explore the role the tools of Processwork played in facilitating this perceptual shift towards a more holistic understanding of the presenting issues.

I will also discuss Processwork theory and review relevant texts as this provides the methodological lens through which I have viewed all the research methods I have used in this study.

The objectives are as follows:

- To examine the belief systems, which form the participants' thinking and design processes.
- To examine the importance of deep democracy and Processwork methods in the facilitation of Social Change, in particular the role of women and other groups marginalised by historical influences, *time-spirits* and personal and collective belief systems.
- To illustrate the importance of process orientated *innerwork* in the facilitation of culturally diverse situations.
- To examine the background structural roles, dynamics of rank, power and privilege and the importance of including unintentional or *double* signals, in the facilitation of conflict and diversity issues.

## Structure of Thesis

This thesis is divided into seven chapters. In the first two chapters current social and ecological crises are outlined and the urgent need for new and innovative ways of thinking and acting to solve these crises is reviewed and discussed. Chapter Three and Four explain the basic theory and methods of Processwork and deep democracy and the methodology that has been used to examine information and insights gathered in the case studies. In Chapter Five the case study material is presented and analysed. Chapter Six compares the results from each case study and evaluates the effectiveness of Processwork and deep democracy with its braided methodology in supporting increased awareness and perceptual shift towards an interconnected holistic worldview. Chapter Seven concludes that through making all the information in the system available the braided methodology constitutes an effective approach for facilitators and designers in our increasingly complex world.

### Chapter One: Context & Statement of Problem

Chapter One outlines the multiple ecological and social problems that humanity is currently facing on a global and local scale and poses the question why as a species we are not already taking urgent action. It is suggested that this is due to a fragmented and non-connected world view based on unconscious beliefs and hidden assumptions. Processwork and deep democracy are put forward as a method to achieve a perceptual shift towards a holistic and interconnected way of thinking and a subsequent change in actions.

### Chapter Two: Contextual Background

This chapter presents a brief introduction to the transdisciplinary field of study for social change and civic engagement, a whole systems approach, meta-design, eldership and other awareness based paradigms. Various methods, authors and activists who work using awareness-based paradigms in both a theoretical and practical context are presented in relation to the facilitation of social change along with the proposed *braided* methodology. The *braided* methodology is described as a metaphor and facilitation tool that endeavors to address and include all information present in a system both tangible and intangible whilst emphasizing the quality of relationship.

### **Chapter Three: The Evolving Story of Processwork**

This chapter presents the history and ongoing evolution of Processwork and deep democracy. It outlines key Processwork concepts, methods and assumptions and defines Processwork specific terms and phrases. The material presented in this chapter is not a comprehensive overview of all Processwork theory, concepts and methods. Rather it is an introduction to the overall approach, and focusses in more depth on those aspects of Processwork methodology directly related to material that arose during the case studies with the aim of providing background information to aid understanding of analyses.

### **Chapter Four: Methodology & Methods**

This chapter describes how workshops, unstructured interviews and feedback sheets were used as a method of collecting data in the four diverse case studies carried out in varying settings worldwide. It describes the methodology of how the concepts outlined in Chapter Three were applied to the case study findings in Chapter Five and Six. It explains how Processwork methodology, its analytical multi-dimensional framework and underlying philosophy of deep democracy and its braided methodology is used as a lens to to examine the case studies, providing the tools to access all the information in the system, using its multi-channelled, whole systems approach.

### **Chapter Five: Case Studies & Associated Findings**

In Chapter Five, four diverse international case studies are presented. These range from activities carried out with female and male Spanish lawyers to Bolivian farmers and Thai monks. Each case study is composed of an outline background context, description of activities carried out with participants and real episodes and feedback from the case studies themselves. This is followed by an analysis of situations that occurred using Processwork methodology and presentation of the resulting conclusions. In line with the four aims, particular focus is placed on identifying belief systems which prevent or hinder the perceptual shift (at an individual, local and global level) away from a fragmented worldview towards a holistic interconnected worldview.

### **Chapter Six: Overall Case Study Conclusions**

This chapter compares observations and feedback gleaned from all the case studies and describes outcomes grouped in relation to the four aims. It reflects on the similarity of



many findings despite the widely differing cultural and social settings in which the case studies were carried out. The chapter specifically examines the contribution of innerwork and the braided methodology of deep democracy with its Processwork tools in facilitating increased awareness of all those involved in social change processes, and any potential contribution in creating wider societal and global perceptual shift.

### **Chapter Seven: So where do we go from here?**

This chapter reflects on the research findings and their relevance in a wider context. It proposes that at a time when many fields and sectors are facing issues of ever increasing diversity and complexity across all scales that many situations require a perceptual shift. With its multi-dimensional lens of deep democracy and braided methodology that facilitates access to all the information in the system, Processwork is considered to be an approach with special relevance in the field of Design and facilitation. Some of the potential weaknesses of the methodology are examined and areas for possible further research are put forward.

## Chapter Two: Contextual Background

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This chapter presents a brief introduction to the transdisciplinary field of study for social change and civic engagement, a whole systems approach, meta-design, eldership and other awareness based paradigms. It introduces various methods, authors and activists who work using awareness-based paradigms in both a theoretical and practical context in relation to the facilitation of social change along with the proposed *braided* methodology metaphor.

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As the world faces these multiple converging crises, threatening human existence, I investigate in this study the need for a new design perspective and meta-design or worldview and tools to facilitate this.

The following sections will deepen the readers' understanding of some of the background influencing the development of Processwork theory and inform the larger context out of which has emerged the concept of sustainable and empowered individuals, communities and organisations.

A section on meta-design explores the importance of design at the worldview level and demonstrates potential practical application of systems thinking in perceiving the background structure of any individual or group process, which can then inform the facilitation of inner and outer diversity.

The Processwork field encompasses many different disciplines. The authors included in this contextual and literary review have been selected as relevant because of their multi-level interconnected approach to both small-scale and larger complex topics and emphasis on combining both theoretical and practical exercises and tools. Their works integrate many different disciplines such as Psychology, Design, Ecology, Philosophy, Communication, Social Organization and Economics amongst others.

This contextual background presents a brief introduction to the transdisciplinary field of study for social change but also takes a broad look at the field by examining various subfields that are not necessarily assumed to be central to social change *per se*. For the purpose of this research the term social change assumes a systemic, interconnected

perspective where social and environmental change are inextricably linked, being part of the same living system. This understanding of social change lays the foundation for the exploration of Processwork and deep democracy and the awareness and tools this paradigm can contribute to the perceptual shift needed in the design of sustainable social change processes.

*Once social change begins, it cannot be reversed. You cannot un-educate the person who has learned to read. You cannot humiliate the person who feels pride. You cannot oppress the people who are not afraid anymore.*<sup>27</sup>

*Cesar Chavez, 1984*

Donella Meadows states in her book *Thinking in Systems*,<sup>28</sup> if we are to address the impending ecological catastrophe it will be essential to change the average person's mind set and behaviour and facilitate a process of *social change*. However—she goes on to say—governments are unlikely to achieve this, particularly with a targets and penalties approach.

*Meta-design*,<sup>29</sup> is an emerging conceptual framework, which suggests that new forms of collaborative design are needed if we are to co-create or facilitate the interdisciplinary design processes needed to address the complex challenge of our current situation.

This research will focus on a Processwork approach in bringing awareness to the belief systems and worldview which influence our perceptions and consequent mind set and behaviour and therefore this section will highlight some of the key influences in its development or emergence as a trans-disciplinary multi-dimensional approach. There is an in-depth introduction to Processwork and deep democracy in Chapter Three.

A section on social change, in particular the inclusion and role of women, and the dynamics of marginalisation and development in the *majority world*<sup>30</sup> explores the effects of

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<sup>27</sup> Cesar Chavez in his address to the Commonwealth Club in San Francisco, Nov. 9, 1984

<sup>28</sup> (Meadows, Donella, 2008)

<sup>29</sup> (Metadesigners Open Network, 2013)

<sup>30</sup> Term replacing the commonly known *third world*, describing large parts of the world where much of population is economically disadvantaged

patriarchy and the interlocking influence of intersectionality<sup>31</sup>, and its influence on long term sustainable design processes. This section includes Civic Engagement, which is becoming an increasingly recognised field of practice, with many modalities. These processes are known as *deliberative and inclusionary processes*, DIP's or social technologies which facilitate face-to-face interaction and engagement between diverse stakeholders and perspectives with the aim of increased awareness and viewpoints of which deep democracy and Processwork methods are a part.

A section on eldership and other awareness-based paradigms illustrates from different perspectives the importance of self-reflexive consciousness and *innerwork*<sup>32</sup> as key components in facilitating inner and outer diversity issues. A section on Biocultural diversity and Earth Based Psychology shows the connection between humans and their environment and the importance of this for long term sustainable communities, including the perspectives of the traditional and indigenous, earth based people from different traditions.

The following section highlights experiences, approaches and insights from practices, which highlight different modes of perception essential to understanding the relevance of perception change.

## **2.1. Social Change and civic engagement**

In this section I will focus on some of the elements of the field that have been identified by the Millennium Assessment Commission, and the Oxfam report by Pam Raworth (see Chapter One). These include the importance of the role of women, indigenous peoples and other individuals and groups that are marginalised by historical influences, time-spirits and personal and collective belief systems in the process of social change.

*Social change refers to any significant alteration over time in behaviour patterns and cultural values and norms. By "significant" alteration, sociologists mean changes yielding profound social consequences.*

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<sup>31</sup> Described on following page

<sup>32</sup> Innerwork is an approach to unfolding the inherent meaning in previously marginalised signals and experiences.

*Examples of significant social changes having long-term effects include the industrial revolution, the abolition of slavery, and the feminist movement.<sup>33</sup>*

*The University of Queensland, Australia,  
Centre for Communication and Social Change*

For the purpose of this research the term Social change assumes a systemic, interconnected perspective where social and environmental change are inextricably linked, being part of the same living system.

Sheryl Sandberg—the Chief Operating Officer of Facebook spoke at the Davos economic conference in 2012 about the role of women in leadership. She spoke eloquently at the event, which in 2012 still only had a 17% attendance of women. The statistics speak for themselves. Her closing comments were the following

*I want my son to have a choice to contribute fully in the workforce or at home, and I want my daughter to have the choice to not just succeed, but to be liked for her accomplishments.*

*Sheryl Sandberg, 2013<sup>34</sup>*

Why would she emphasise her wish that her daughter be liked for her accomplishments? This points to belief systems or cultural perspectives that influence our way of seeing success and leadership.

The current IMF director Christina Lagarde's career advice for young women in a recent interview said:

*Dare. That's number one. Number two is educating yourself, improve your skills... and feel confident about it. There will be other women to help you. It wasn't the case, you know, in my day. There were very few instances in which women would help other women. I think that has changed enormously.<sup>35</sup>*

*Christina Lagarde, 2012*

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<sup>33</sup> (Centre for Communication and Social Change, 2014)

<sup>34</sup> (Transcript for Sheryl Sandberg: Why we have too few women leaders, 2013)

<sup>35</sup> (Lagarde, Christine, 2013)

While there has been legislation in many countries to afford equal opportunities, equal pay, and women's rights, if we look at the world stage we still see today a predominant male presence in leadership and if we look a little further—we see beyond a shadow of a doubt the degree to which discrimination of women is still very much a central issue in 2013 in terms of addressing social change. One of the ten United Nations Millennium Development Goals<sup>36</sup> is to promote gender equality and empower women. Michelle Bachelet, previously the prime minister of Chile, and currently the Executive Director, UN Women, speaking at the Davos Economic Forum said:

*It is not only the right thing to do to educate women it is the smart thing to do...*<sup>37</sup>

*Michelle Bachelet, 2013*

This comment was made after the following statement

*When one in three girls in developing countries is likely to be married as a child bride, when 140 million girls and women have suffered genital mutilation; when millions of women and girls are trafficked in modern day slavery; and when women's bodies are a battleground, and rape is used as a tactic of war: it is time for action.*<sup>38</sup>

*Michelle Bachelet, 2013*

Eco feminism, along with other philosophies, draws strong parallels between the violation of women's bodies, their value and their rights and the violation of the earth. Vandana Shiva, an Indian environmental activist, physicist and anti-globalisation activist writes:

*that many women in subsistence economies who produce wealth in partnership with nature, have been experts in their own right of holistic and ecological knowledge of nature's processes. However she makes the point that these alternative modes of knowing, which are orientated to the social benefits and sustenance needs are not recognized by the capitalist reductionist paradigm, because it fails to perceive the*

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<sup>36</sup> (United Nations, 2013)

<sup>37</sup> (Speech by Michelle Bachelet, 2013)

<sup>38</sup> (Ibid.)

*interconnectedness of nature, or the connection of women's lives, work and knowledge and the creation of wealth.*<sup>39</sup>

Vandana Shiva, 1992

It is clear looking at these examples of discrimination, marginalisation and abuse against women and the influence of worldviews and culturally and personally held belief systems that many parallels can be found in discrimination of all types. The Feminist perspective on gender discrimination has evolved in recent years to include the perspective of *intersectionality*, which maintains that it is not possible to separate the discrimination of women from the inherent discrimination found in the class system, in racism, and in the current global economic situation.

Later in this chapter Sulak Sivaraksa and Joanna Macy speak about the impact of the structural adjustment programmes, amongst others, set up by the IMF and the World Bank and the emphasis of the Global Military Complex, all of which contribute to the discrimination and marginalisation of women, all minority groups and the earth. These macro systems and collectively adhered to belief systems and worldviews which underpin them ensure that the power and control of global resources are maintained by an extremely small percentage of the global population, and the related legal systems which in many cases uphold the *rights* of transnational corporations over the rights of individuals, countries, the environment, indigenous and minority groups, women, children, the future generations and the earth. The documentary *The Corporation*<sup>40</sup>, examines the development and influence of the business corporation, today's dominant institution with the legal status entitled to most of the legal rights of a human being.

In the facilitation of social change it becomes clear that the marginalisation of women, the earth as a living organism and the impact of racism, class, socio-economic background, sexual orientation and other axes of identity interact and often simultaneously and systematically contribute to social and environmental inequality. Awareness of this seems key in shifting consciousness to embrace an expanded worldview, which perceives life as an

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<sup>39</sup> (Shiva, Vandana, 1992 p 184)

<sup>40</sup> (Achbar, Mark; Abbott, Jennifer; Bakan, Joel, 2014)

interconnected whole system and consequently assumes that everything ultimately affects everything else.

Intersectionality (or Intersectionalism) is a feminist sociological theory first outlined by Kimberley Crenshaw in 1989.

"Intersectionality" is the name that is now given to the complex of reciprocal attachments and sometimes polarizing conflicts that confront both individuals and movements as they seek to "navigate" among the raced, gendered, and class-based dimensions of social and political life. Both as individuals seeking to make a socially just and fulfilling "everyday life," and as collectives seeking to "make history" through political action and social movements, we struggle with the unstable connections between race, gender, and class. The methodological and explanatory framework for linking these three axes of identity and difference, of alliance and antagonism, remains elusive. Any serious comparative historical view suggests that demands for solidarity across race-, class-, or gender-lines are as likely to compete as to coalesce.<sup>41</sup>

It posits the impossibility of separating out one form of oppression from another and rather highlights that the more commonly referred to forms of oppression within society such as racism, sexism<sup>42</sup>, homophobia or belief based prejudice do not act independently but often simultaneously creating a system of oppression that reflects the intersection of multiple forms of discrimination.

*Many of the experiences Black women face are not subsumed within the traditional boundaries of race or gender discrimination as these boundaries are currently understood, and that the intersection of racism and sexism factors into Black women's lives in ways that cannot be*

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<sup>41</sup> (Centre for New Radical Studies, 2014)

<sup>42</sup> For the purpose of this study, feminism is a social movement that defends equality for all beings. Since the beginning of feminism as a social movement, feminists have been defending other causes like black people equality, not only women's equality. Sexism is a discriminatory paradigm within Patriarchy, which is the whole discriminatory system. Sometimes feminism is understood as a search for the female domination, but that is called *Hembrismo*. Hembrismo is the counterpart of Machismo (male domination).



*captured wholly by looking at the race or gender dimensions of those experiences separately.*<sup>43</sup>

*Kimberly Crenshaw, 1991*

This is a way of expressing how the whole is more than the sum of its parts in terms of oppression. From a Processwork perspective we can also see the need to address these multiple layers of oppression and discrimination from a multi-dimensional perspective, addressing not only the outer levels of social change, which are so important such as rights based education, legislation and equal opportunities, but one that also focuses on the internal, more subjective feeling experience where the effects of internalised oppression are experienced and our inner critics and internalised belief systems, often reflecting the voices of the majority cultural perspectives, undermine the ways we feel about ourselves, each other and impact our ability to relate and function in the world.

### **2.1.1. Deep democracy and Civic engagement**

When speaking about democracy, the mind goes quickly to a political or social level, but, according to Wilson (2004), for the individual, deep democracy is the enfranchisement of self at the level of mind, heart, and spirit: the realization that “I count.”

Wilson creates a connection between different approaches of civil engagement such as Social Technologies (methods within the Art of Hosting like world cafe, open space, etc.) and Processwork, from the basis of deep democracy. These key questions are central to these social technologies. Juanita Brown and David Isaacs (developers of World Café) share in their publication *Systems Thinker*<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> (Crenshaw, Kimberle, 1991)

<sup>44</sup> (The Systems Thinker, June 2001)

*How can we improve our ability to think and speak more profoundly, about the crucial issues facing our communities, our organizations, our countries and our planet? How can we access the collective intelligence and wisdom, we need to create innovative pathways?*<sup>45</sup>

*Brown, Juanita & Isaacs, 2001*

The following scheme is an overview of the variety of social technologies for civil engagement.

**Table 1: Social Technologies for Civic Engagement**

<b>Deliberation</b>	<b>Dialogue</b>	<b>Collaborative Action</b>	<b>Community Conflict Resolution</b>
Citizen Summits	Public Conversations Project	Study Circles	Community Mediation
Citizen Juries	Conversation cafes	Appreciative Enquiry	Narrative Mediation
Consensus Conferences	World Café	Community Collaborative	Circle Sentencing
Scenario Workshops	Dialogue Circles	Policy Dialogues	Circle Sentencing
National issues Forums	Compassionate Listening	Future Search	Peace-making Circles
Deliberative Polling	Transformational Conversations	Open Space Technology	Healing Circles

Many activists and organizations have focused on shaping techniques or methods to go further in civil engagement, from deliberation approaches to dialogue, collaborative action and finally community conflict resolution. These different approaches are more suitable to community and group moments than others.

*From a systems perspective, deep democracy is an open dynamic system springing from the diverse points of engagement where individuals and community come together. It neither privileges the individual nor imposes*

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<sup>45</sup> (Brown, Juanita and Isaacs, David, 2001)

*collective values. It is the point of creative tension between individual and community held in place by the transformation of self through greater understanding of, compassion for, and relationship with an expanding circle of others.*<sup>46</sup>

*Patricia Wilson, 2004*

Other social technologies also consider a systemic, participatory perspective, sharing therefore some aspects with Processwork, described in detail in Chapter three. The Art of Hosting is an approach to leadership that scales up from the personal to the systemic using personal practice, dialogue, facilitation and the co-creation of innovation to address complex challenges.<sup>47</sup> Other approaches share main aspects of the civic engagement like outcome mapping, conflict transformation and theatre of the oppressed.

Outcome mapping<sup>48</sup>, is a project progress measurement system that was designed by the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) in Canada. It differs from traditional metrics in that it does not focus on measuring deliverables and effects on primary beneficiaries but on behavioural change exhibited by secondary beneficiaries. It is a highly participatory methodology, which engages multi stakeholders at an early stage in an intentional design process that is later monitored and evaluated based on behavioural change and long term, sustainable impact. For example, in an international development project, success is not measured just by wells installed or trees delivered to a certain village or region, but also, that the villagers were trained to look after the wells, know how to use them and repair them and had resources to get the spare parts needed if they broke down. There would most likely also be some kind of social/cultural process included in the success of the project whereby the community would need to work together to keep the well's running. This framework has a worldwide online community.

Augusto Boal founded Theatre of the Oppressed, which is another example of a participatory approach focused on social change. This method was born in 1971 in Brazil with the specific goal of facilitating local problems. The actors take a difficult situation from

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<sup>46</sup> (Wilson, Patricia A, 2004)

<sup>47</sup> (Art of Hosting, 2013)

<sup>48</sup> (Earl Sarah, Carden Fred, Smutylo Terry, 2001)

everyday life, such as parents trying to help their child with a drug addiction or a neighbour being evicted from their house. The audience is encouraged to intervene by stopping or even replacing the actors and enacting their own ideas. The initial practitioners thought it would work well only in South America, however this method is now practiced in more than 70 countries. In Europe, Theatre of the Oppressed expanded and the Rainbow of Desire came into being. As the model developed it went beyond the goal of helping its participants to come to terms with their past experiences, and also addressed trying to rid the participants of ongoing oppressions, with a view to transforming the individuals, their relationships and promoting social change in society as a whole.

This type of interactive theatre is rooted in the pedagogical and political principles drawn from the education method developed by Brazilian educator Paulo Friere. He was originally denied access to education himself due to poverty and hunger during the great depression in Brazil in the 1930's, and later following his curious spirit and desire for learning dedicated himself to developing liberation educational principles for all those deprived of education. He felt strongly that there is no such thing as a neutral education process. He felt that Education either indoctrinates people into the rationale of the present system bringing about conformity to that system, or it becomes the "practice of freedom" and the way that women and men can begin to critically address and participate in the transformation of their world. The four key elements of this approach which inform Theatre of the Oppressed and other educational activities were to facilitate the participants to first perceive the situation they were living through, then to analyse the root causes of the situation, including both internal and external sources of oppression, to subsequently explore group solutions to these problems and lastly to take action to change the situation in terms of social justice.

Looking at this approach from a Processwork perspective, I can see parallels between these key elements. In Theatre of the Oppressed the method encourages the ability to see the whole system and all its parts, understand the underlying issues that influence current reality and their effect both internally and externally and then to take action on an outer level. In Processwork terms, this speaks to the need to differentiate and then address the different strands or dimensions of reality in order to facilitate social change of a kind that is capable of sustaining itself over time.

*No pedagogy which is truly liberating can remain distant from the oppressed by treating them as unfortunates and by presenting for their emulation models from among the oppressors. The oppressed must be their own example in the struggle for their redemption.*<sup>49</sup>

Paolo Friere, 1970

## 2.2. Meta-design and whole systems approach

*Since the late 1960s, the concept of design has undergone a rapid expansion, both in academic discourse and in industry. [...] Expanding far beyond beautification and form giving, or the technical conception and creation of artefacts, processes and organizations, design is increasingly being recognized as a fundamental influence in most human activities.*<sup>50</sup>

Daniel Wahl, 2006

According to the research of Daniel Wahl, in his PhD Design for Human and Planetary Health: A Holistic/Integral Approach to Complexity and Sustainability, (University of Dundee, 2006), the maps and methodologies that we use to facilitate this integral design for sustainability are also considered to form part of the design process. He suggests

*Stepping even further upstream, and acknowledging the epistemological assumptions and habits that influence our perceptions of the world, we become aware of how different world views—in themselves a form of meta-design—affect how we design our world, and that not all world views are socially or ecologically sustainable. The epistemological*<sup>51</sup> *and*

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<sup>49</sup> (Friere, 1970)

<sup>50</sup> (Wahl, Design for Human and Planetary Health, 2006)

<sup>51</sup> Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies knowledge and attempts to define what distinguishes true from false knowledge. Clearly how this question is answered depends very much on how and through which lenses we perceive reality. Epistemology has evolved from Plato's immutable views of knowledge as absolute ideas or forms existing independently from observation, through the post Renaissance period where the two main epistemological views focused either on sensory perception or rational reflection. For the purpose of this research I would like to avoid such absolute relativism and am interested more in the epistemological perspectives, which seek coherence and assume as the constructivists Maturana and Varela argued, that an organism cannot distinguish between internal and external perceptions. In particular the perspectives that have evolved more recently suggest that knowledge has a self-organising function pursuing

*ontological foundations, of our way of making sense of and assigning meaning to the reality in which we participate, are the root of human experience and design.* <sup>52</sup>

*Daniel Wahl, 2006*

In business and management consulting fields, the need for upstream interventions are at the centre of progressive interventions. Stephen R. Covey addressed this recently in the following words:

*If you want small changes, work on your behaviour; If you want quantum-leap changes, work on your paradigms.* <sup>53</sup>

We begin to see that the worldviews we hold, consciously and un-consciously inform meta-design as it is the, often-unconscious lens, or set of assumptions, that influences what and how we design and how we conduct the design process. We see reflected in the design of our current society in general, the conscious and unconscious drivers or majority tendencies in most groups, societies as essentially by-products of independent fragments of knowledge competing for domination. These trends, informed by worldviews which do not have long term sustainability at their core can be seen in advertising, popular trends and fashions and in the global economic drive towards continual growth. Therefore how can additional awareness be introduced at this worldview level in such a way that it will influence our modes of perception and the consequent underpinning epistemological/ontological perspectives, which inform our worldview. For example, in the design of a basket, the types of basket we can imagine are linked to our vision of the world (worldview).

Wahl researches the process of design as far upstream as we can trace it in human consciousness, stressing these questions: What role do organizing ideas play in our

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goals of its own, like when a snow ball starts to roll down a hill it gathers snow on the way. Similarly, in a meeting one idea will lead to another—often leading to creative synergies where the whole is greater than the sum of its parts.

<sup>52</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>53</sup> (Covey, Steven R, 1989)

perception? How does our dominant worldview influence our organizing ideas and thereby literally influence the way we see the world?

Donella Meadows in her book *Thinking in Systems* suggests that for a systemic change to occur the two most effective leverage points for facilitating this are

*to become aware of the paradigms—the mind set out of which the system—its goals, structure, rules, delays, parameters—arises.*<sup>54</sup>

*Donella Meadows, 2008*

Ralph Waldo Emerson illustrates this in the following:

*Every nation and every man instantly surround themselves with a material apparatus, which exactly corresponds to.... Their state of thought. Observe how every truth and every error, each a thought of some man's mind, clothes itself with societies, houses, cities, language, ceremonies, newspapers.....It follows, of course, that the least enlargement of ideas... would cause the most striking changes of external things.*<sup>55</sup>

*Ralph Waldo Emerson, 1887*

*From a systems perspective*

*We change paradigms by building a model of the system, which takes us outside the system and forces us to see it whole.*<sup>56</sup>

*Donella Meadows, 2008*

For example, on July 20, 1969, when I was 10 years old this phenomenon was experienced perhaps for the first time by humanity as a whole when Neil Armstrong stepped onto the moon for the first time in history. This event was simultaneously broadcast across the world and according to the BBC reports at that time, *never before had so many people been so attuned to one event at one time.*<sup>57</sup> *It was estimated that 500 million people across the*

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<sup>54</sup> (Meadows, Donella, 2008, p. 163)

<sup>55</sup> (Emmerson, Ralph Waldo, 1887, p. 177)

<sup>56</sup> (Meadows, Donella, 2008, p. 163)

<sup>57</sup> (BBC News, 2013)

*world were watching the event on television, and countless millions more listening to the radio coverage. The psychological impact of this event, together with the effect of seeing images of the earth from outer space was profound.*

*It suddenly struck me that that tiny pea, pretty and blue, was the Earth. I put up my thumb and shut one eye, and my thumb blotted out the planet Earth. I didn't feel like a giant. I felt very, very small.<sup>58</sup>*

*Neil Armstrong*

However, although momentarily many millions of people realised that we are all part of one living system, inextricably linked to it and each other, this collective insight has not translated into collective behaviour change. While a shift in paradigm in an individual can happen in a millisecond, such as Neil Armstrong suddenly seeing in a new way, it is harder to shift whole societies.

Thomas Kuhn<sup>59</sup> who has written extensively about the paradigm shifts in science points to some of the key things needed to shift a paradigm from his perspective. He suggests that you keep pointing out the failures and incongruences in the old paradigm, and frame clearly and repeatedly the attributes of the new one, working with change agents and the majority of the population who are open minded.

Donella Meadows emphasises that the main leverage point from a systemic perspective however is not just to shift paradigms, but to transcend paradigms. To realise that no paradigm has the ultimate answer and to cultivate a meta position or the ability to see from outside, as Neil Armstrong did, that all the mind sets and ideas we use to frame our reality ultimately are relative. However—as Meadows describes, the understanding that uncertainty therefore is an inherent part of our reality is often what sends us running back to our 'known' frames of reference. These high level leverage points of intervention in a system tend to be very threatening to a system, the questioning of the very assumptions which inform all of the structure and actions. For this reason often societies find a way to eliminate or imprison people who have that broader perspective and get into a position

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<sup>58</sup> (Looking Back at the Earth Quotes, 2013)

<sup>59</sup> (Kuhn, Thomas, 1962)



where effecting real change might be possible. There are many examples of this where visionaries, radical thinkers or simply people who strayed too far from the majority perspective of the time have disappeared in one-way or another.

From a Processwork perspective this apparent dichotomy, often experienced as social tension or conflict between the dominant paradigm and transcendent, radical or marginalised views which seek to shift the cultural norms highlights the need for frameworks and a language that can frame the complexity and multileveled nature of this challenge.

Deep democracy with it's multi-dimensional map and braided methodology is used in this study as a structure and language to frame the Consensus reality, measurable and quantifiable dimension, the Dreaming or subjective more feeling dimension of reality and the essence level which ultimately points to the non dual dimension which David Bohm termed *unbroken wholeness*, the shamans of Mexico called *the Nagual*, and in some religious settings might be known as God or the Divine source is This dimension, while unmeasurable in quantifiable terms, seems to provide an important sense of meaning or orientation at a deep level for many. Mindell coined a phrase deep democracy, which encompasses this multidimensional perspective. This framework and meta-skill can be extremely helpful in framing and working with this apparent dichotomy.

### 2.3. Deep Democracy

Deep Democracy is a universal meta-skill<sup>60</sup>, which reframes the Democracy paradigm.

*We have frequently printed the word Democracy, yet I cannot too often repeat that is a word the real gist of which still sleeps, quite unawakened, notwithstanding the resonance and the many angry tempests out of which its syllables have come, from pen or tongue. It is a great word, whose history, I suppose, remains unwritten, because that history has yet to be enacted.*

*Walt Whitman, Democratic Vistas, 1871*

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<sup>60</sup> See Glossary

Deep democracy is not only a political program, but also a way of working with people, a feeling skill, or "meta-skills" as Amy Mindell calls such skills. After many seminars in the 80s, Arnold Mindell's term "deep democracy" first appeared in book form in his 1992 book, *"THE LEADER AS MARTIAL ARTIST - An Introduction to Deep Democracy, Techniques And Strategies For Resolving Conflict + Creating Community"*. Deep Democracy is a psycho-social-political paradigm and methodology.

*Unlike "classical" democracy, which focuses on majority rule, Deep Democracy suggests that all voices, states of awareness, and frameworks of reality are important. Deep Democracy also suggests that the information carried within these voices, awareness's, and frameworks are all needed to understand the complete process of the system. Deep Democracy is an attitude that focuses on the awareness of voices that are both central and marginal.*<sup>61</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 1992*

In the subsequent chapters I will research the need for awareness and understanding of this process of unconscious marginalization of certain parts of our experience and inclusion of others as a central design problem from a worldview or meta-design perspective.

*Identifying design as the activity that structures experience and expresses human intention through interactions and relationships, both materially and immaterially, can help us to become more conscious of the effects of our actions. It also emphasizes the omni-presence of either conscious or un-aware design in everything we do. Such an understanding can provide a point of departure from which we can begin the long process of learning how to participate appropriately in the natural processes that maintain the health of the biosphere and therefore are preconditions for a sustainable human culture. Design has both the power and responsibility of shaping the future experiences of humanity.*<sup>62</sup>

*Daniel Wahl, 2006*

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<sup>61</sup> (Siver, Stanford, 2008, p54)

<sup>62</sup> (Wahl, Design for Human and Planetary Health, 2006)

Mindell suggests the importance of an awareness practice that facilitates a multi-dimensional perception of reality, where the unseen dimension is equally important as the consensus reality experiences, which we perceive through our senses, and value according to the predominant cultural values of our time and region. This is crucial if we are to design and facilitate sustainable perspectives and solutions for the complex situation.

The central methodology of this research brings to awareness a more dynamic and holistic perspective of conscious-process-participation, especially attentive to the emergent properties of the field that is embedded in a group.

*In this sense, emergence is a key concept within the theory of complex dynamic systems. It describes the unpredictable and uncontrollable manifestation of novel properties arising out of complex interactions of diverse components. Emergence, therefore takes place at a higher explanatory level and the novel forms, behaviours and properties of the whole system “are neither predictable from, deducible from, nor reducible to the parts alone.”<sup>63</sup>*

*Jeffrey Goldstein, 1999*

In other words, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. As in an orchestra, or a slow cooked stew, the sounds or flavours combine to produce something that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Fritjof Capra in his book *The Hidden Connections* describes the relationship between Emergence and Design and the emergence of novelty. In the context of leadership and organisations he suggests that

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<sup>63</sup> (Goldstein, Jeffrey , 1999)

*The spontaneous emergence of a new order. The phenomenon of emergence takes place at critical points of instability that arise from fluctuations in the environment, amplified by feedback loops. Emergence results in the creation of novelty that is often qualitatively different from the phenomena out of which it emerged.... The constant generation of novelty = 'nature's creative advance', as the philosopher Alfred North Whitehead called it—is a key property of all living systems.<sup>64</sup>*

*Fritjof Capra, 2002*

For example, in an organisation the event that triggers the process of emergence could be an offhand comment or unintentional communication. This information which seems significant or meaningful to some in that organisation circulates this through various feedback loops such as email strings for example and even amplifies the comment, which in turn generates responses, reactions. If this continues to escalate it can result in organisational chaos, confusion, uncertainty, doubt; and out of that chaotic state a new form of order, organised around new meaning, emerges.

Capra goes on to say that there needs to be some degree of willingness to be disturbed (e.g. in the case of an oppressive regime—the response is more likely to be to oppress the disturbance), and that the instability that arises may lead to breakdown or it may lead to break through. For example in relationship or organisation where a major issue arises –let's say an apparent betrayal of trust- the amplification of this triggering event, the discussions, feedback and so on could either lead to the breakdown of those relationships –or possibly the emergence of a much deeper relationship with qualities of connection or purpose which could never have been predicted. Nelson Mandela and his antiapartheid leadership and inspiration could never have been predicted as an outcome of imprisoning him for 27 years on Robin Island. However, if he had not had an initial openness to finding meaning in this 'disturbance' the outcome might have been very different. This illustrates Wahl's point,

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<sup>64</sup> (Ibid.)

*Appropriate meta-design is about providing a meaningful story that can guide appropriate participation and thus lead towards increased sustainability.*<sup>65</sup>

*Daniel Wahl, 2006*

In this light, cultivating a culture which has an openness to disturbance and assumes that there is potentially the essence of something useful in the experience, rather than a tendency to marginalise any disturbances, or experiences which do not go along with the cultural majority view must be an important component in shifting the meta-design or mind set which informs the cultural beliefs and norms. This is a central assumption in the Processwork approach that I describe in Chapter Three.

How to deal with diversity, in terms of unity and interdependence, as Wahl explains is a challenge for designers and every other professional that envision future states like social change.

*Designers and engineers need to learn and participate, at the highest level, in future state visioning, to practice ecological design and to do so with a new ecologically ethical position. All three together are a truly Gaian strategy, and what some are now calling—natural design.*<sup>66</sup>

*Seaton Baxter, 2008*

### **2.3. Eldership & other Awareness-Based Paradigms**

All the approaches below link innerwork and the importance of reflective practice with social action. These authors their work have been particularly influential in deepening my understanding of eldership and awareness based practises and provide a broader context for this research. This connection between inner and outer can also been seen clearly in the analytical structure of deep democracy, described in Chapter Three.

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<sup>65</sup> (Wahl, Daniel C., 2006, p96)

<sup>66</sup> (Baxter, Seaton 2008 p. 5)

### 2.3.1. Forms and relevance of Innerwork

Innerwork is a very central component of Processwork. Although from one perspective innerwork can appear unrelated to the presenting issues, from a deep democracy perspective it is intimately related. I propose that the multi-dimensional structure of deep democracy and meta-skill of eldership can support a connection with the deepest part of ourselves. In this way it can bring awareness to the unconscious centralisation/marginalisation process, which tends to exclude certain minority viewpoints and identities, both within us and amongst others. Deep democracy shows us that awareness of these different levels can shift our perspective, or assemblage point—radically altering the relationship to each other, the biosphere, and ourselves. Processwork, which I will describe in more depth in Chapter Three, is used as a way of becoming aware of the underlying assumptions and belief systems, which inform our perceptions and thoughts. It is a trans-disciplinary, systemic approach which values the inner experience of individuals and highlights *awareness*, suggests a language and process that tracks the flow of subtle and overt, local and non-local communication signals. Consciousness is analysed and explored in terms of awareness of these signals, roles, dimensions of rank and power, belief systems, (or edges) and phenomenological experience within the multi-dimensional structure of deep democracy and eldership.

Effective, deep communication is essential and can lead to the creation of resilient communities and organisations that strengthen the inner capacities of the individuals and their part in the whole. This awareness based practice at its heart highlights *innerwork*, or the development of self-reflexive consciousness. *Inner work* is an approach to unfolding the inherent meaning in previously marginalised signals and experiences. Innerwork is important as a way of realizing different levels of reality within ourselves and connecting a group experience with a personal experience and is a very central component of Processwork.

### 2.3.2. Innerwork and the Findhorn Foundation

The Findhorn Foundation<sup>67</sup> ecovillage in Moray, Scotland, has been a pioneering ecovillage since 1985, is at the heart of the largest intentional community in the UK and has received Best Practice designation from the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). It demonstrates the links between the spiritual, social, ecological and economic dimensions and, its constantly evolving model is used as a demonstration and teaching resource by several universities and professional organisations. While there are several innovative and renewable energy supplies, ecologically constructed buildings, and a solar aquatic sewage system, and many interesting ecological design features, the focus here is on the social, cultural and spiritual aspects of this ecovillage and in particular the innerwork or spiritual component of community life. Innerwork practices at Findhorn are based on deep inner listening, co-creation with the intelligence of nature and service to the world.

Three adults and three children founded the Findhorn centre in 1962. At that time they were focused on spirituality, nature and living together practising organic farming. Peter Caddy, Eileen Caddy and Dorothy Maclean founded a western mystery school. In 1968, the booklet *The Findhorn Garden: An experiment of Co-operation between the three kingdoms* showed a vision of nature and humanity in co-operation that was pioneered in the Findhorn Community.

*One radiant energy pervades and gives rise to all life. While it may speak to us through plants, nature spirits of the human beings with whom we share life on this planet, all are reflections of the deeper reality behind and within them. Myth has*

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<sup>67</sup> Near to Findhorn, a traditional fishing village in northern Scotland, located at the point of meeting of the Moray Firth and Findhorn Bay, a quiet experiment has been underway for the past 40 years. This experiment, started by Peter and Eileen Caddy and their friend, Dorothy Maclean, and joined by 3 children and the confines of an old caravan, was one of co-creation. Co-creating a life based on cooperation between the human, natural and spiritual realms. The experiment led initially to the evolution of an 'unintentional' community and now to the creation of an ecovillage: a model for human settlements based on ecological, economic, social, cultural and spiritual sustainability. In 1998, the Foundation's ecovillage project was accorded NGO status with the UN where it contributes to dialogues about sustainability, values and spirituality.

*become reality in Findhorn garden, not to present us with a new form of spiritualism, but to offer us a new vision of life, a vision of unity. Essentially, the devas and nature spirits are aspects of our own selves, guiding us towards our true identity, the divine reality within.*<sup>68</sup>

*Findhorn Community, 1975*

The concept of one energy pervading all and giving rise to all life is found, not only in religions around the world, but is at the heart of Gaian theory, whole systems theory, natural design and Quantum Mechanics amongst others.

Peter Caddy expressed that one of the advantages of working as a group was that our personal guidance could be checked with the others, when there was any doubt as to whether it was coming from a lower self or from a higher level. When they all felt the same inner knowing, they had to proceed

Eileen Caddy had personal guidance in her meditation practices, as she has explained in her books, *God spoke to me* (1966) or in many other works in which she speaks about the God within.

Another definition of the God within could be simply a worldview that considers everything to be interconnected. Eileen Caddy often referred to the universal mind, and believed that if all people could simply connect with the universal mind, they would know what was needed for the well being of the whole from moment to moment, and that all that was required to tap into the universal mind was to listen deeply. Eileen herself practised meditation every day for several hours, during which times she would receive *guidance*, or insight as to what was needed by the collective. “Be still and know that I am God”, were the words that she heard in a sanctuary in Glastonbury that were pivotal in the creation of the Findhorn Foundation community. This is an example of innerwork. Eileen’s capacity to listen to ‘the still small voice within’, her deep faith and ability to follow the guidance she received led her to become an influential spiritual teacher, with her books being translated into 27 different languages.

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<sup>68</sup> (Caddy, 2014)



My own experience at Findhorn has led me to realise that while it is possible to listen deeply to that *still small voice within*, or intuitive, gut sense of what is needed, at times the ability to differentiate between one internal voice and another (often easily confused with the voice of the inner critic, or the personal and cultural belief systems that influence us unconsciously), can be challenging. This is one of the reasons that I was so drawn to study Processwork with its framework and tools to differentiate between these different voices, in the field. Never the less, what Eileen Caddy called the universal mind all those years ago, I suspect is what Mindell calls the Processmind, what Carl Gustav Jung called the collective unconscious, and is known elsewhere by many names including Atman, the Buddha mind, the Tao that cannot be named and many more.

Group work was also a central part of the Findhorn community practice and ‘attunement’ is a practice of deep listening practised by groups. The function of this is to ‘listen’ to a source of information that goes beyond the immediate interaction of the personality, and to ‘tune into’, what is needed for the well being of the whole. Often these attunements are guided meditations that support the participants to focus on a joint project, and to invite images that might shed insight beyond the rational mind’s perspective.

### **2.3.3. Thomas Berry**

*So tonight as we look up at the evening sky, with the stars emerging against the fading background of the sunset, we think of the mythic foundations of our future. We need to engage in a shared dream experience.*<sup>69</sup>

*Thomas Berry, 1990*

Thomas Berry, an eco theologian, cultural historian and one of the main environmental thinkers in North America has inspired a generation’s thinking about humankind’s place in the Earth Community and the universe. He was the director of the Riverdale Centre for religious research and his major publications include *The Dream of the Earth* (1998) and *The Universe Story*, co-authored with Brian Swimme (1992).

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<sup>69</sup> (Thomas Berry, 1990)

Berry's intellectual journey is remarkable for the breadth and depth of his study. He anticipated the need to understand other cultures and religions and predicted the environmental crisis before it became commonly recognised. He combined the study of Western and Eastern civilizations with a deep appreciation for the spiritual contributions of the indigenous traditions. While Berry was initially a cultural historian, in the last thirty years of his life he became a historian of the Earth. His interest moved from human history to cosmological history. The *Universe Story*, which he co-authored with Brian Swimme, represents this convergence. This shift in focus was informed by witnessing the emergence of a planetary civilization, as cultures came into contact around the world, often for the first time, during his lifetime. During the same period, the resources to sustain this were being undermined by massive environmental destruction. This experience awoke Berry to the current situation and he suggested that this trajectory would continue into the future unless humans embraced a change in worldview.

This led him to formulate the need for a *New Story*, which reflects the need to establish renewed reciprocity of humans with the earth and of humans to one another with an emerging reverence for all life. This then informs a new perspective regarding our place in the unfolding of Earth's history, and an increased awareness as to our role in guiding the evolutionary process at this crucial point in history. This *New Story* or mythic consciousness, (seeking meaning in our world), would articulate a profound connectedness to the Earth which he suggests, might reverse the self-destructive cultural tendencies we have put in motion. This would then form the basis on which to create long term economic and ecological sustainability. For Berry, the coming together of environmental concerns and social justice issues is at the heart of the *New Story*.

He suggests that without this bigger perspective or framework, which articulates our historical roots and planetary connection, it will be more difficult to map out our way towards a viable future. He suggests that some of the symptoms of the lack of connection to this broader perspective can be found currently in our global society. These often manifest in terms of individual alienation, despair, apathy, destructiveness, and sense of deteriorating communal ties or ethical responsibilities to both the natural and human world, which then contribute to the problem.

The purpose of the *New Story* is to provide a context and perspective for implementing the kind of changes needed to sustain and foster life on Earth. These changes are social, political and economic. Berry's framework assumes that when one's worldview shifts to reflect an understanding of the interrelatedness of all life, one's ethics will consequently embrace the need for human justice and environmental sustainability.

Berry has clearly illustrated in the points selected above some of the factors which contribute to the existential and environmental crisis we find ourselves in currently. His writing goes on to identify the vision and frameworks that might counter this trend. He challenges us to see and to reverence the wonders of the natural world and to set aside the pragmatic and entrenched view of the Earth as being there only for the personal use of humans.

In his essay on Loneliness and Presence, he refers to the time of the treaty with the European settlers in 1854, where Chief Seattle of the Squamish tribe in the Pacific North West coast of the USA, is reported to have said that when the last animals have perished humans would die of loneliness. Currently we are in the midst of a period of mass extinction of species and if we are in fact intrinsically connected to the whole, this must have an effect – not only on our outer, but also our inner diversity. He illustrates the primordial need we have as humans for the natural world in the following example.

*While hunting in Arizona, the forester Aldo Leopold shot a female wolf with a pup. He tells us that he reached the wolf in time to watch “ a green fire dying in her eyes”. I realised then, and have known ever since that there was something new to me in those eyes—something known only to her and to the mountain” From then on, his perspective on human relations with the natural world was utterly changed.*<sup>70</sup>

*Thomas Berry, 2006*

In this example, Berry reminds us that, “the universe is composed of subjects to be communed with, not of objects to be exploited.”<sup>71</sup> He points to an intimacy of connection

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<sup>70</sup> (Berry, Thomas 2006 p. 36)

between humans and wolves—illustrating a mutual understanding and recognition that goes beyond words and highlights a richness in the connection between humans and the non human world which cannot be measured quantitatively, and yet nourishes the soul, or sense of intimacy with the natural world that offers a sense of belonging. He suggests that this type of experience can put us in contact with three essential qualities for our well-being: Wonder, and sense of awe to nourish the mind, Beauty to inspire the imagination, and intimacy of connection.

#### **2.3.4. Joanna Macy and The Work that Reconnects**

Joanna Macy is an environmental activist, author, and scholar of Buddhism, general systems theory and deep ecology. Her work spans the gap between the deepest non-dual level of existence to the most deeply disturbing phenomenological issues of our times. The perspective that Buddhist and general systems theory brings to her social and environmental action through her framework and tools of *The Work that Reconnects*, links innerwork to outerwork across all scales. There are many parallels between Macy and Mindell's theory and practice, and I frame below some of the central perspectives from Macy's work as additional context for my emphasis on innerwork and the importance of the lens through which we perceive.

*The greatest revolution of our time is in the way we see the world. The Mechanistic paradigm underlying the Industrial Growth Society is giving way to the realization that we belong to a living, self-organizing cosmos. General systems theory, emerging from the life sciences, brings fresh evidence to confirm ancient, indigenous teachings: the Earth is alive, mind is pervasive, and all beings are our relations. This realization changes everything. It changes our perceptions of who we are and what we need, and how we can trustfully act together for a decent, noble future.*<sup>72</sup>

*Joanna Macy, 2007*

Macy talks about this current period in history as being under the influence of the late capitalist, consumer society and how it is a perfect example of a runaway situation that you

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<sup>72</sup> (Macy, *World as Lover, World as Self*, 2007)

get into when you think that a being human being, or a person, or group or nation can live immune to what it does to the rest of creation. One of the underlying assumptions that inform the capacity for action of this sort is that there is somewhere else to go, whether that be heaven, nirvana or an afterlife. For human beings to come to terms with the fact that there is nowhere to go, and that we all mutually and intimately belong to one living system is a sobering thought. Facing this reality can provoke deep fear and insecurity as we face the uncertainty that this inevitably brings. Never the less the opportunity to engage creatively with a process of change is also possible when we face the unknown, and knife-edge of uncertainty. Macy speaks about self-reflexive consciousness, which in simple terms means that we can choose where we can put our mind and the opportunity that this offers us as a species.

Our mind is endowed with self-reflexive consciousness. It evolved when the system's internal complexity grew so great that it could no longer exist by instinct or trial and error<sup>73</sup>.

The *Work that Reconnects* offers tools to navigate the territory from Despair to Empowerment as the signs of Climate Chaos and wobbling structures based on an unsustainable premise of unlimited growth become harder to ignore. Whether this situation is faced with awareness, courage, and open hearts or fear and denial is, according to Macy, perhaps the central decision we have to make. Her programme offers tools to explore these choices and offers tools to build inner resources and awareness, while transforming our fear into an opportunity for transformation.

Macy speaks metaphorically of the Shambala prophecy. This tale, passed on to her by her Tibetan Buddhist teachers in Northern India speaks of the kingdom of Shambala and the shambala warriors. This kingdom exists only within the human heart and mind, and the training consists of being handed two weapons, the bell and the *dorje*, representing compassion and insight. These warriors cannot be recognised by insignia, uniforms or banners, their task is to go into the corridors of power and dismantle the weapons that have been created there, which, as they have been made by the human mind, can be dismantled

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<sup>73</sup> Macy – coming back to life - add citation

by the same. The condition of radical interdependence in all phenomena is the underlying worldview that informs this work, and therefore it is clear that this is not a battle between the good and bad guys, but that good and evil run through every human heart and that we have a choice from moment to moment as to which will inform our intention. Good, is understood as being in service to the benefit of the whole, bad, acting as if our actions had no external repercussions.

Other authors and activists like Sulak Sivaraksa are culturally connected to Buddhism and their proposals are oriented to emphasize the relevance of socially engaged spirituality.

*That our skin-encapsulated notion of the self is the knottiest issue in contemporary social science....(it) has prevented us from agreeing on the proper way to reconcile psychology and socio-cultural science.....Our civilization has failed the individual in failing to infuse him with an understanding of the larger dimensions of self as the servant of ... a larger ecosystem.<sup>74</sup>*

*Joanna Macy, 1991*

### **2.3.5. Sulak Sivaraksa**

The Wisdom of Sustainability, Sivaraksa's most recent publication, continues E.F. Schumacher's work on Buddhist economics in *Small Is Beautiful: Economics as if People Mattered*. It highlights small scale, sustainable alternatives to globalisation based on Buddhist principles, which are applicable to Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. Sulak Sivaraksa is one of Asia's leading social thinkers and activists. His work includes writing over 100 books in Thai and English and founding the International Network of Engaged Buddhists and many other educational and political grassroots organisations. After a violent coup in Thailand in 1976, he worked together with a close colleague, Nicholas Bennett: most recently of the United Nations and the World Bank, to create the first human rights organisation in Thailand. Over a three-year period they managed to get more than 11,000 political prisoners out of prison. Among his students there are many young people who

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<sup>74</sup> (Macy, Joanna 1991)

want to play a role in a more human centred development process. Meditation, non-violence and the simple practice of breathing is at the heart of his work.

Sivaraksa is clear that we live in a world that is out of balance and that action is needed now to address this situation. Peace needs to replace war, nonviolence to replace violence, generosity to replace greed, love to replace hatred, and understanding to replace ignorance. He suggests that there are currently more prostitutes than monks in Thailand and that Buddhist practices have been all but lost at the grassroots level.

Sivaraksa's writing style is uncompromising and direct and he highlights globalisation, development, violence and governance from a Buddhist perspective. In this section I will attempt to capture the key points he is making, linking them to social action and innerwork.

Sivaraksa outlines a brief history of recent historical events, which have shaped the globalised economy, reframing their disastrous consequences as an on going opportunity to awaken to the situation that is clearly not sustainable. He describes the establishment of the United Nations following the end of the Second World War and the creation of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund as way to generate prosperity and equality for rich and poor nations alike. Although the initial impulse was sincere in its attempt to eradicate poverty, the structures created to facilitate this have caused even more inequality in wealth, along with extensive environmental degradation and a huge loss of culture and sense of belonging and extreme and widespread poverty.

Sivaraksa's attitudes can be addressed from Processwork perspective as *meta-skills*. One of the rarest meta-skill nowadays from Mindell's point of view is eldership. Eldership is defined by Processwork but other authors use other terms and metaphors to tackle that type of knowledge and attitude that an elder holds: being able to empathise with all parts in a situation or a conflict, recognizing his or her own part related to every part.

Although Sivaraksa is extremely outspoken, and in Processwork terms voices strongly the role of the disenfranchised, his shared practice of meditation, non- violence and the simple practice of breathing develops a quality of resilience, groundedness and detachment that makes it clear the important role innerwork has to play in social activism. Sivaraksa founded the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, of which Joanna Macy is also a member.

The network sees the transformation of the individual as inextricably linked to the transformation of the world and vice versa, as do the other authors in this study.

### **2.3.6. Additional Perspectives**

In the section I have described the work of authors who I consider to be of principal relevance when comparing their treatment of eldership and awareness-based paradigms with that of Processwork.

Nader Shabahangi, PhD., is Founder of Pacific Institute and Age Song Institute, Co-Founder of Age Song Senior Communities, Co-Founder of Elders Academy Press and a licensed psychotherapist and noted author. He is also a guest lecturer at international conferences focusing on aging, counselling, and dementia and has studied Processwork.<sup>75</sup> In an unpublished manuscript he framed the topic of eldership with the following quote.

*When an elder dies, it's like the burning of a library.*

*African proverb*

In his unpublished document Shabahangi speaks about the various ways in which elders in our society get marginalised. He speaks of ageism, and how, so often older people are not valued, or made use of, even with the wealth of experience that they have accrued. He also comments on the fact that

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<sup>75</sup> (Pacific Institute, 2014)



*Given that recorded human history principally has been a history dominated by a patriarchal system of leadership, there is comparatively speaking less record of the role women have played in eldership. The last decades have seen important research and publications, though, highlighting this omission and outlining how women have helped guide individuals and communities throughout human history. These research projects have shown that the wisdom of women and their eldership was once revered very highly within human societies. Etymologically, to give just one example, many of the words describing older women today have a derogatory meaning.<sup>76</sup>*

*Nader Shabahangi, 2003*

From the teleological perspective derived initially from Carl Gustav Jung, and central to Processwork, each human being has a soul, longing for wholeness, and each person accrues a vast wealth of experience, and the ability to care for and be cared for. To marginalise the deeper meaning and value in the ageing process, and to discard the experience as worthless, or something that should just be locked away, in male or female elderly people seems like yet another symptom of the fragmented worldview. This world view suggests that value ultimately equals productivity and the more receptive, 'feminine', qualities of caring, and being cared for become marginalised, which I would suggest is to our detriment. In most Eastern countries the relationship to age and the elderly has traditionally been much more respectful in many cases in comparison with some of the western models and in my experience continues to be so.

We have lost most of the Councils of Elders, as would have been found in some Native American communities such as the Iroquois, where the young warriors had to consult with the elder's wisdom council before going to war to reflect on the impact of the loss that would result from a multi-generational perspective. As recently as 1979 their five nations council of elders tried to warn the powers that be about the lack of sustainability in Nuclear Power. Perhaps the wisdom of their words can be seen more clearly now after the Tsunami and nuclear disaster in Fukushima, Japan, where fifteen miles from the Nuclear power plant

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<sup>76</sup> (Shabahangi, N. 2003) Unpublished manuscript.

radiation is still four times higher than it ever was near the Chernobyl nuclear disaster site in Russia.

*Proponents of the Nuclear Fuel Cycle issue statement after statement to the people, urging that the nuclear reactors are fitted with safety devices so sophisticated that a meltdown is only the most remote of possibilities. Yet we observe that no machinery or other invention made by human hands was a permanent thing. Nothing humans ever built, not even the pyramids of Egypt, maintained their purpose indefinitely. The only universal truth applicable to human-made devices is that all them fail in their turn. Nuclear reactors must also fall victim to that truth.<sup>77</sup>*

*Six Nations Iroquois Confederacy Statement, 1979*

Building on Mindell's perspective that we are currently experiencing a crisis in eldership, or capacity to care for the well being of the whole, as demonstrated in the quote above, Shabahangi goes on to point out that

*Today, however, elders are scarcely available to guide and initiate the young. There is an absence of elders also because the old have not been given the skills and ability to be elders. Moreover, in the last few centuries, especially in the industrialized countries, the status of the elderly as respected members of their societies has declined. Paralleling this decline has been a diminution of the elders' role in their respective communities. Whereas elders used to be teachers and guides, the rise of public education and market economies have, among many other factors, made the elderly much less central and important.<sup>78</sup>*

*Shabahangi, 2003*

In conclusion, one could say that today we have a crisis, or lack of eldership. Leadership in today's dynamic and complex world is undergoing a huge transitional phase. Leaders are being constantly challenged to function successfully in increasingly diverse, competitive, complex, global context. Leaders are also often culturally identified – they identify with a dominant style, dominant culture and dominant trends – and reflect the identity of the organization or group. They consciously or otherwise tend to identify with the power

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<sup>77</sup> (Arrien, A, 1993, p155)

<sup>78</sup> Shabahangi, N. 2003. Unpublished manuscript.

paradigm. This also happens in part because they get “dreamed up” (pulled by the field to fill in a particular role) by the organization, society, country, or world as “the one who is supposed to have all the power or be “the expert” From a process perspective, however, leadership is a role, one among many in an ever changing field. Potentially, it is a fluid role. For a leader to be able to acknowledge and promote potential leadership in other members, she has to develop a sense of deep democracy, and the *braided methodology* that facilitates a feeling attitude toward life that appreciates all the voices and roles in a given system. It also recognizes the equal importance of consensus reality – everyday reality, the reality we all consent to as being real (facts, issues, problems, people), dreamland figures (role, ghost roles – experiences talked about yet not represented, feelings) and the essence (common ground) that connects everyone.

A leader embracing deep democracy and the braided methodology transitions from leadership to eldership. Eldership, according to Arnold and Amy Mindell, is a universal metaskill – a feeling attitude with which one approaches life – arising from one’s deepest self and its direction.

An elder is home to all parts of themselves as well as the group. It is a loving presence, an aura that others can sense and feel which creates a welcoming atmosphere and safety. It may arise spontaneously in a comment, a gesture, an experience or feeling attitude or may be a way of “being” It may arise out of the groups need for innate wisdom.

The evolution of leadership into eldership being an awareness evolution is the core Process Work concept that underlies the transition that is happening in the world. We see the leader transforming into the elder, when she is able to access her deepest self and bring in the perspective it gives her. In connecting the relevance of inner and outer work, she is an innate part of the overall process and facilitates the emergence of resolution from her conscious use of her rank and privilege.

## Chapter Three: The Evolving Story of Processwork

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This chapter presents the history and ongoing evolution of Processwork and deep democracy. It outlines key Processwork concepts, methods and assumptions and defines Processwork specific terms and phrases which will later be used to analyse the case studies.

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*Meaning makes a great many things endurable—perhaps everything. No science will ever replace myth, and myth cannot be made out of any science. For it is not that "God" is a myth, but that myth is the revelation of a divine life in man.<sup>79</sup>*

*Jung, Memories, Dreams, and Reflections*

### 3.1. Introduction

This section provides a foundation for the discussion and research of the application of Processwork in the case studies described in Chapter 5 and in the discussion of findings and final conclusions in Chapters 5 and 6. It will cover those aspects of Processwork that are particularly relevant to this research. They are, however, only part of much wider domain. See figure 5.<sup>80</sup>

The cases presented in the research are largely drawn from my work with course participants. This section is an overview of the Processwork approach, its various applications in the facilitation of individual and group transformational processes, and its terminology. Consequently it has been written using the terms that Arnold Mindell, the founder of Processwork, framed to describe its central concepts, definitions of which can be found in the glossary at the end of the chapter.

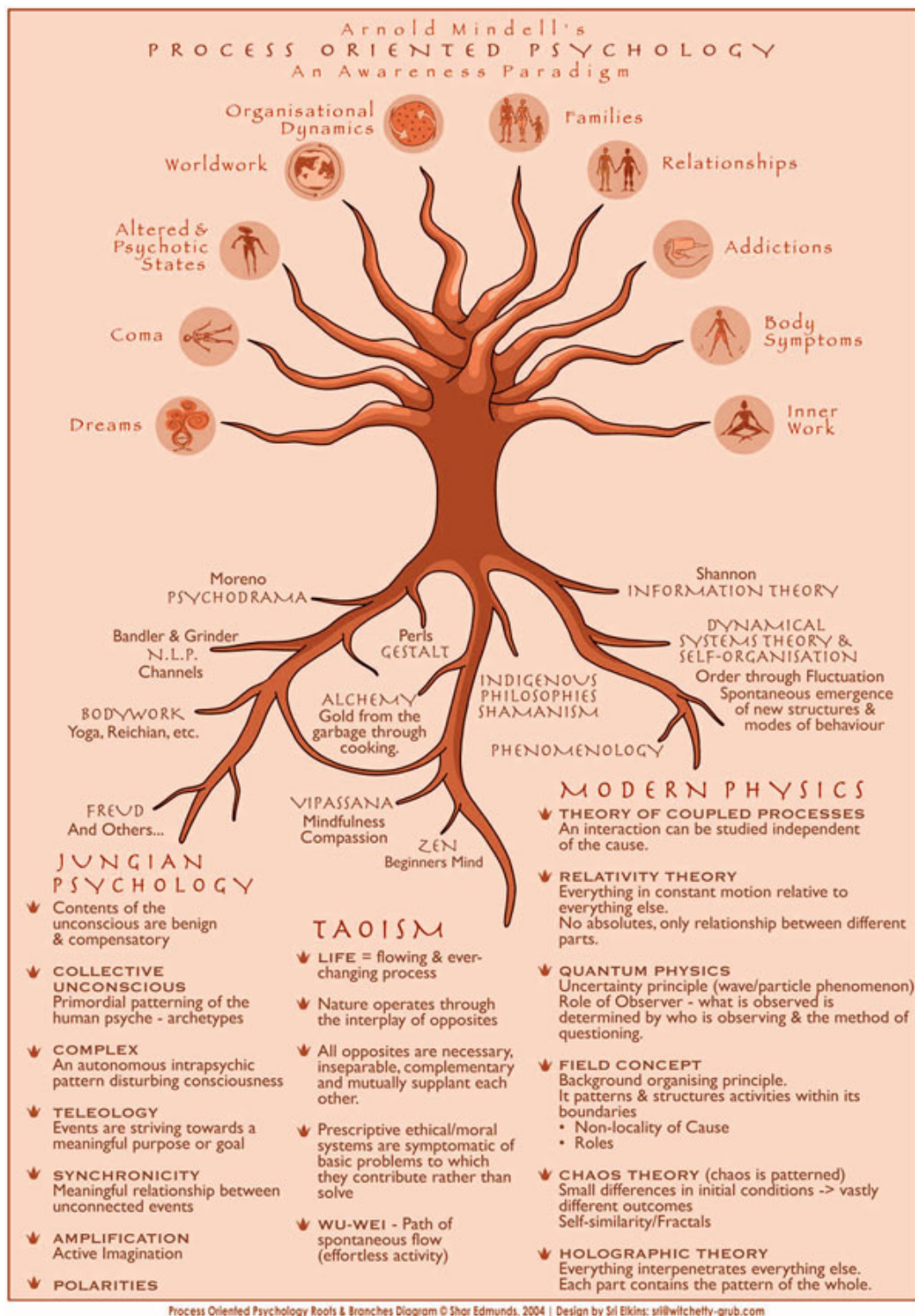
The term *process*, from a Processwork perspective, has assumed a particular meaning based on the process philosophy of Alfred North Whitehead (1979), which extended concepts from quantum physics into philosophy. Arnold Mindell's (2000) work has, similarly, extended the theories and application of concepts from Quantum physics into psychology.

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<sup>79</sup> (Jung, Carl Gustav, 1963)

<sup>80</sup> For further information about the full spectrum of Processwork see [www.aamindell.net](http://www.aamindell.net)

Since quantum physics is based on subjective observation (a necessarily psychological phenomenon), Processwork is not seen as a metaphor for quantum physics; rather, physics is seen as a metaphor for process. (Siver, S. 2006).



**Figure 3 : The Roots & Branches of the Processwork Approach**

### 3.1.1. Arnold Mindell as a Founder of Processwork

Processwork, an approach that continues to evolve, was initially conceived, proposed and developed by Arnold Mindell and then subsequently in collaboration with his wife, Amy Mindell, and their colleagues of the last thirty years. Mindell has a Masters in physics from MIT and is a graduate of the Jung Institute, Zurich, holds a doctorate in psychology from the Union Institute and University and is the founder of The Processwork Institutes in Zurich, Switzerland, and Portland, Oregon, USA. He has carried out innovative research on the connections between dreams and bodywork, relationship conflicts, comatose states, psychiatry and large group conflict facilitation. To date, he has published nineteen books, and been translated into twenty-one languages.

In his early practice as a Jungian analyst, Mindell began to realize that similar information would arise from body symptoms and from dreams. His own physical problems gave him the opportunity to use himself as a case study. He experimented with a broad spectrum of bodywork approaches and medical treatments (Diamond & Spark, 2004). He began publishing his findings in his first book *Dreambody: The Body's Role in Revealing the Self*, (1982).

Processwork is a psychotherapeutic paradigm, framework and methodology for unfolding the deeper meaning in a wide range of human experience. It does this by tracking signals, somatic experiences and synchronicities until their meaning is revealed. Processwork does not hold change, *per se*, as a goal. Its goal is awareness. This approach has its roots in Taoism, which describes the *river of life* and the ways in which it can be followed. Processwork brings awareness to the signals that point to the *river* and provides tools that allow us to unfold their embedded meaning. Although change is not the goal of Processwork, it does support the processes of change.

Processwork has its roots in Jungian and Gestalt psychologies, Shamanism, Taoism, Sociology and Physics. Although it was originally focused on psychotherapy for individuals, as Mindell began to apply the approach in the group that had formed around him as a teacher of Processwork, he realized that these skills and perspectives were also effective in unfolding the deeper processes that emerge within a group context.

*Dreaming*, a concept found in Australian Aboriginal culture, underpins the philosophy of Processwork from a Shamanic perspective. It is used to refer to a set of beliefs or spiritual identity of an individual or group. Traditional Australian indigenous peoples believe that every person exists separately in the Dreaming (which they refer to as *dreamtime*) and they see all phenomena and life itself as part of a vast and complex system or network of relationships that can be traced back to the ancestral Spirit Beings. According to Mindell (1982), dreaming is the metaphysical or spiritual experience and meaning behind behaviour, signals, symptoms and disturbances. This illustrates an underlying tenet in Processwork—that meaning can potentially be found in every experience when we learn to unfold it with awareness. This perspective is shared with Jungian psychology, which is teleological in nature.

The connection to a common *source*, found in many creation myths across the world, can be likened to the Big Bang theory<sup>81</sup> and our consequent interconnected nature. Entanglement, in so far as it is relevant to Processwork, is also linked to this theory and will be explored later in this chapter. Taoism, another central influence on Processwork, also expresses the essence of the Dreaming.

*The concept of the Tao... signifies the primordial essence or fundamental nature of the universe. In the foundational text of Taoism, the Tao Te Ching, Laozi explains that Tao is not a 'name' for a 'thing' but the underlying natural order of the universe whose ultimate essence is difficult to circumscribe. Tao is thus "eternally nameless" (Dao De Jing-33. Laozi) and to be distinguished from the countless 'named' things which are considered to be its manifestations.*<sup>82</sup>

*Wikipedia, 2013*

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<sup>81</sup> A cosmological theory holding that the universe originated approximately 20 billion years ago from the violent explosion of a very small agglomeration of matter of extremely high density and temperature. The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language, Fourth Edition copyright ©2000 by Houghton Mifflin Company. Updated in 2009. Published by Houghton Mifflin Company.

<sup>82</sup> (Wikipedia, 2014)

The concept of Tao is a holistic conception of Nature, differing from the Newtonian perception, which suggests that Nature is an object, separate from human beings, rather than a living, breathing organism of which we are all part.<sup>83</sup>

Processwork is an interdisciplinary approach that includes ways of working with; and bringing awareness to; dreams, body symptoms, addictions, relational work, conflict facilitation, leadership, organizational and group work, altered states of consciousness, coma and end of life experiences. Mindell's books address all of these different areas, as well as other contributions by the Processwork community. The following three paragraphs offer background to those books that are considered his key works. The evolution and development of Processwork can be understood through this publishing sequence. (To find the complete list of books published by Mindell please see the bibliography.)

The development of Processwork, then known as Process Orientated Psychology, began in the early 1970s. Mindell expanded some of Jung's ideas, including movement and bodywork into his work as a Jungian analyst. During this period he wrote *Dreambody* (1982) in which he describes the relationship between dreams, body sensations and symptoms. This addressed a theoretical gap in Psychotherapy at the time, one that bridged psyche and soma, spirit and matter.<sup>84</sup> Mindell went on to publish *Working with the Dreaming Body* (1985). In the following years he added relationship work and signal theory to dream and bodywork. As he deepened into his work with the body, he became interested in yoga and meditation practices, leading to working with people in altered states of consciousness including some in comatose states and others with chronic mental disturbances. *City Shadows* (1988) and *Coma, Key to Awakening* (1989) are books written on these themes.

For those particularly interested in the roots of Processwork, *Rivers Way: The Process Science of the Dreambody* (1985) presents the theoretical framework behind his earlier work and highlights how Processwork facilitates the evolving and dynamic patterns inherent in body symptoms and dreams. As Mindell became interested in group work and began to

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<sup>83</sup> See references to Thomas Berry and Earth Jurisprudence in Chapter three for more information

<sup>84</sup> Mindell has recently received the Pioneer award 2012 from the United States Association of Body Psychotherapy to honour the contribution that he has made to this field. (United States Association of Body Psychotherapy, 2012)



research this topic he wrote *The Year One* (1990), *The Leader as Martial Artist* (1992/2000), *Sitting in the Fire* (1997), and *The Deep Democracy of Open Forums* (2002).

Processwork continues to evolve, exploring both individual and collective Dreaming Process through different lenses. Since 2000 Mindell has published several new books including: *Dreaming while Awake* (2000), *Quantum Mind* (2000), *Earth Based Psychology: Path Awareness from the teachings of Don Juan, Richard Feynman, and Lao Tse* (2007) and *Process Mind: A User's Guide to connecting with the Mind of God* (2010). I will refer to these books later in this chapter, along with other books written about Processwork by some of Mindell's original students from his time in Zurich and others, including Julie Diamond, Max Schupbach and Arlene Audergon.

While the philosophical roots of Processwork are derived from the sources mentioned above, it also draws significantly on ideas developed within other psychotherapies such as Gestalt Therapy developed by Fritz and Laura Pearls and Bandler & Grindler's system of Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP). In both Gestalt and Processwork, for example, the past is considered part of the present. It is possible to determine why something happened, but the cause is still said to be happening in the present. From NLP, Processwork draws on the channels of communication, which emphasize the significance of congruent communication and the information derived from mixed signals of communication, where two messages are being communicated simultaneously in different channels. A simple example of this is:

Verbal: "I do not have a problem with you!"

Non-verbal: person avoids eye-contact, looks anxious, has a closed body language etc.

According to research conducted by Albert Mehrabian, one of the main contributors to NLP,

*... only 7% of the meaning of our communication is carried in the words we use. The remaining 93% in the psychology and voice tonality we use when we communicate, and according to these findings therefore the receiver will accept the predominant form of communication, which to*

*Meharabian's finds is non-verbal ( 38 + 55%), rather than the literal meaning of the words (7%).<sup>85</sup>*

*NLP World, 2014*

Unfolding the meaning in the unintentional signals of the participant, or group, is an area of research I focus on in the case studies. *Anchoring*, or developing the ability to recall the felt sense of insight that arises from unfolding the essence that is useful in the unintentional signal is another technique that has been drawn from NLP, although Processwork has broadened this concept to include proprioceptive experience.

Processwork is not a medical approach that uses the framework of pathology to describe reality, but an awareness practice that accepts and supports our experiences from a phenomenological viewpoint. It focuses on *perspective*: becoming aware of the lenses through which we perceive each other, the world, and ourselves. During my own Processwork training I was often challenged to face my own *edges*<sup>86</sup>, or internalized, unconscious belief systems. These edges were threatening to my primary identity and ideas about who I thought I was in terms of actions and communication style in the world. These edges can be personal or collective and unconsciously influence the way we perceive the world. When one challenges these assumptions, or simply becomes aware of them, in my experience, one's perception begins to change.

Mindell also drew on the work of Carlos Castaneda, an American anthropologist who recounts his apprenticeship Don Juan, an indigenous Yaqui Shaman in Mexico. In this tradition the terms *Nagual* and *Tonal* are used to describe the different dimensions of reality and *non-ordinary* reality or dreaming. In his teachings, Don Juan referred to first and second attention, which is reflected in Mindell's use of these terms.<sup>87</sup> These different modes of perception are referred to in many traditions around the world and in *Quantum Physics* where Mindell discusses how relativity affects our perspective.

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<sup>85</sup> (NLP World, 2014)

<sup>86</sup> See Glossary of Terms

*If you bounce a ball while you are on a train it goes up and down. But for someone on the ground looking through the window at the ball as it goes up and down and the train rolls along, the motion of the ball is not simply up and down at all. Relative to the observer standing on the ground, the ball appears not only to move up and down but to go forward as well.*<sup>88</sup>

*Mindell, 2000*

The following example from *A Journey to Ixtlan*<sup>89</sup> illustrates first and second attention and connecting with the dreaming worlds. Carlos Castaneda, (the shaman's apprentice), is walking through the twilight in the desert with his mentor, the Yaqui Shaman Don Juan. Suddenly, out of the corner of his eye, Castaneda catches sight of what looks like a wild animal trapped in a bush, writhing in agony and in the throes of death. Its disturbing movements terrify him. He looks again and is relieved to see that it is only a branch caught in the wind. He shares his experience with Don Juan who tells Castaneda that he has missed the point by simply rationalising his experience and that his dreaming had blown life into that branch and that the vision of the wild animal was meant for him.

This experience can be seen as a metaphor to be interpreted, as one might work with an image in a night time dream. It also emphasises the importance that Processwork places on the mysterious parallel dreaming worlds that regularly catch our attention through disturbances and *flirts* of all kinds. We often tend to discount these in favour of consensus reality or quantifiable experience. It is interesting that the quest for meaning, which has arisen several times so far in this introduction to Processwork and can be found in all ancient cultures, is never based only in the pursuit of material, or consensus reality experience. This mythical, archetypal quest can also be found in the archetypal *hero's journey* described by Joseph Campbell.<sup>90</sup> As with Castaneda's example above, meeting our deepest selves often means being willing to face our deepest fears and potentially drop our personal history, or ideas of how we are attached to them. Castaneda called this the path of the warrior. In the hero's journey, as in many ancient traditions, there have been rites of

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<sup>88</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2000 p.266)

<sup>89</sup> (Castaneda, 1991)

<sup>90</sup> (Campbell, Joseph, 1968)

passage designed to facilitate a kind of psychological death, enabling new perspectives to arise. When one realises that one's own momentary experience is only a partial view of the world, a shift in consciousness occurs that can embrace the views of others, facilitating deeper relationship and openness to change. This can enable temporary resolutions to arise in the midst of conflict. Mindell referred to this process as the *death walk*.<sup>91</sup> Often at the threshold of change in identity many of us resist change, even though it might be what we most deeply long for. Mindell calls this place between the known and the unknown, the edge, which can be experienced as a dynamic set of experiences in constant flux. In a group context we might call signals at this edge between the central and more marginal identity, a hot spot. The experiences that disturb us at the edge between the part of the field or our identity that is more known to us, and that which is less known to us are often referred to as edge figures, or *ghost roles*.<sup>92</sup> These are disavowed voices in the field which are unoccupied (no one is representing or expressing the role) but which is nonetheless felt to be present, e.g., a black man entering an all-white business club may sense that racist actions or thoughts are somehow present even though no one is doing anything blatantly racist at that moment. Racism is often a ghost.

In his book *Rivers Way*, Mindell describes process in the following way.

*I use process to refer to changes in perception, to the variation of signals experienced by an observer. The observer's personality determines which signals he picks up, which he is aware of and which he identifies himself with and therefore reacts to.*<sup>93</sup>

*Mindell, 2001*

This quote highlights a key concept within Processwork, the *observer*. The observer is not thought to take an objective fixed position, as one might find in Newtonian Physics. Rather, it takes the Quantum concept of observer, which assumes a subjective, non-objective perspective in which what is perceived is influenced by the lenses through which the observer gazes.

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<sup>91</sup> (Mindell A. 1993, p. 200)

<sup>92</sup> See Glossary of Terms

<sup>93</sup> (Mindell A., 1985, p11)

*The observer is crucial in the outcome of events in both quantum and dreaming realms.*<sup>94</sup>

*Quantum Mind, 2000*

Processwork does not have a goal of change. The philosophy that underpins this perspective has its roots in Taoism where every person is inherently drawn toward alignment with nature, or nature's intelligence. Mindell would call this the *process mind*<sup>95</sup> and argue that there is a river to be followed that will show the way. Further, the self-organizing principle or mind of the system or individual will inform the direction as long as the belief systems or edges do not unconsciously inhibit this process. Hence the importance placed on working with the disturbances that arise.

Processwork focuses on noticing signals, the pattern behind them and unfolding the meaning found in them. Although change is not the goal, change can emerge from this process. This experience is confirmed in contemplative neuroscience<sup>96</sup> where the work of Daniel J. Siegel suggests that the three components scientifically proven to promote neuroplasticity are attention, novelty, aerobic exercise and possibly a fourth, emotional meaning. If we train our awareness to perceive subtle signals, it is likely that as well as unfolding the signals and finding meaning within them, the very act of focusing our attention, will it self promote increased neuroplasticity. This activates genes, stimulating synaptic growth, such that over a number of months, new neurons can grow and create new neuron firing patterns.

Signals of this process appear in body symptoms, as explained in *Quantum Mind and Healing* (Mindell, 2004) or even in altered states or extreme situations like coma, better explained in *Coma: A Healing Journey* (Mindell, 1999).

In a recent book published by Mindell, *Processmind* (2010), he connects cosmic patterns seen in physics with experiences occurring in psychology and world spiritual traditions. He

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<sup>94</sup> (Mindell 2010 p185)

<sup>95</sup> See Glossary of Terms

<sup>96</sup> (Siegel, Dan, 2010)

draws together ideas about Aboriginal totem spirits, quantum entanglement, and non-locality to describe the structure of God experiences<sup>97</sup>

### 3.2. Metaphors

Throughout his work, Mindell uses metaphor to communicate the Processwork theoretical framework. Coming, as he does, from a Shamanic perspective, Castaneda suggests there is hidden meaning waiting to be unfolded in his being momentarily terrified by something that suddenly moves violently during the twilight walk.<sup>98</sup>

One of the best-known Processwork metaphors is the concept of *riding the horse backwards*, which is also the title of a book by Mindell.<sup>99</sup> It refers to the counter intuitive behaviour of a mythic figure from the Lakota and Hopi traditions known as the *Heyoka*; his role being similar to that of the court jester in medieval times. John Fire Lane Deer writes about this character in his book *Seeking Visions*.<sup>100</sup> Rather than shying away from pain or a disturbance of some sort, or unconsciously reacting to it, Processwork invites you to focus your attention<sup>101</sup> on the disturbance and unfold the experience. One of the underlying tenets of Processwork, which has teleology at its heart, is that there is useful information in any disturbance that when unfolded with awareness, is potentially useful. A popular expression like *there is an elephant in the room* can be also understood as a helpful metaphor for getting closer to the idea of ghost roles, group atmosphere and the field.

### 3.3. Basic Concepts in Processwork

In their introduction to Processwork, *A Path Made by Walking*, Julie Diamond & Lee Spark (2004) illustrate what they consider to be the basic concepts of the theory:

- *Following the flow of process*. This implies accepting what is happening in the moment and not resisting and holding onto the absurd and impossible.

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<sup>97</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2014)

<sup>98</sup> (Diamond, Julie and Spark, Lee 2004, p104)

<sup>99</sup> (Mindell A. & A.,1992)

<sup>100</sup> (Deer, Erdoes & Lane, 1972)

- *Differentiating the flow of process.* Mindell describes three levels of reality as part of the flow (consensus reality, dream level and essence level) and differentiates between the better known (primary process) and the lesser known part of the flow (secondary process or NCR experience).
- *Noticing and unfolding a process.* This implies a differentiated awareness, which Mindell also frames as *first attention* and *second attention* in accordance with Castaneda (1972). In order to notice the process, we follow signals that are messages expressed in different channels of communication.
- *Meta-skills for following the process:* Meta-skills are the feeling attitudes and fundamental beliefs about life, which permeate and shape all of the facilitator's skills and interventions. These *skills* are central to Processwork and can be studied and cultivated. The metacommunicator is the one that frames the process.

### 3.3.1. Noticing and unfolding the Dreaming Process

Differentiated awareness is at the heart of noticing a process. Mindell suggests that one needs access to both first attention and second attention, in order to perceive not only the more tangible, or consensus reality part of our experience, but also the unintended less obvious parts. For example, the atmosphere in the room, an incongruent signal in someone's tone of voice, or a sudden phone call from someone we unexpectedly dreamt about the night before.

*Unfolding a process involves noticing a secondary or Non Consensus Reality (NCR), experience in the initial description of the problem, and amplifying its expression until a new meaning or aspect of identity emerges, and then integrating the new experience into everyday life<sup>102</sup>*

*Diamond & Spark, 2004*

This method was developed from communication theory,<sup>103</sup> which frames intended and unintended communication. The primary process of an individual or group communicates the intentional language and gestures. The secondary process conveys unintended

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<sup>102</sup> (Diamond, Julie; Spark Jones, Lee, 2004,p18)

<sup>103</sup> (Watzlawick & Bavelas, 1968)

communication non-verbally through body language and tone of voice that often leads to confusion. When not brought into awareness, it creates an information float or atmosphere that many can sense but no one names.

Mindell developed a method for tracking how experience manifests through multiple channels. Following this technology, in order to map and unfold the process of a client, a facilitator creates a hypothesis to start his or her intervention. A Processwork intervention depends on being able to notice signals, which indicate consensus reality, measurable, tangible facts and figures, secondary process, unfolding the dreaming process in the unintentional signals and then integrating the inherent meaning into the everyday reality of the client.

### **3.3.2. Signals**

Processwork tracks signals, overt and obvious ones as well as more subtle, secondary or flickering signals that are barely perceivable. Following and unfolding the signals will access the dreaming process of the client. The way the signals present direct the precise steps to unfolding the process. The facilitator looks for sensory-grounded information and the language and paralinguistic of the secondary or NCR experience. The process is guided by the client's positive or negative feedback. Sensory-grounded information is communicated through channels and the facilitator might ask questions such as, "How do you know you are having that experience?", "Do you feel it?", "Do you see it?", "Do you hear it?" etc.

A *double signal*, or mixed message, is two different and contradictory messages being expressed at the same time. One the sender is aware of and one they are not. This leads to incongruent communication, which can lead to conflict, as the sender is sending two different communication messages at the same time but is only aware of one. Unfolding the double or unintentional signal is a doorway to the deeper dreaming process or the parts of our experience that we are not so aware of.



### 3.3.2. Channels of Communication

*A Channel is a sensory, motor or relational mode of perceiving or communicating experience.*<sup>104</sup>

*Diamond & Spark, 2004*

There are six channels of communication. Four simple channels and two composite channels. The four simple channels are the following: The movement channel which encompasses any movement, however small or imperceptible. The auditory channel with its linguistic and para-linguistic phenomena. These include digital communication, or intentional messages, as well as analogue communication or paralinguistic phenomena, which includes all unintentional sounds, of which we are often unaware, that accompany the context, e.g., sighs, coughs, stutters, laughs. If we think or speak out loud to ourselves this would be also be considered part of the auditory channel. The proprioceptive channel: sensing inside and body sensation. If a client looks or glances down this might indicate that they are having a proprioceptive experience, as might a gentle caress of their own hand against their leg or face for example. The visual channel: something you can see or an image you can remember. If a person in a process is looking up, it might indicate that they are imagining something in the visual channel, i.e., *seeing* something with inner vision. All experiences that are accessed through images (e.g., night time and daytime dreams, fairy tales, myths and symbols) indicate the visual channel. The relationship channel, which involves the flow of experiences, associated with others. Indicators of more secondary or marginalized experiences in the relationship channel might include gossiping about someone or having sudden strong feelings for someone else (either attraction or repulsion or *dreaming up*) which is a phenomenon linked to double signals. For example, a person in a relationship is identified with being helpful and generous but secondarily they are experiencing a nagging feeling of resentment or resignation at the nature of the relationship dynamic. They might feel over stretched in their willingness to be in a support role but find it hard to state this clearly (because internally they are at an edge and their inner voice at the edge says things like, "But you are so lucky, you should be generous, it is not such a big

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<sup>104</sup>(Diamond, Julie; Spark Jones, Lee, 2004, p25)

deal”, etc.). In such a case, someone is *dreamed up* when they respond to another person’s unintended communication signals without realizing it. In this case, the recipient of the generosity might find they are being irritable or upset in some way with the other person without knowing why. They might notice that they no longer feel like this when the interaction with the other person is no longer happening. The world channel, which recognizes the importance of synchronicity as an a-causal connecting principle. It can be described as the simultaneous occurrence of two meaningful, but not causally connected events. Jung described it as follows:

*[Synchronicity is] the simultaneous occurrence of a certain psychic state with one or more external events, which appear as meaningful parallels to the momentary subjective state and in certain cases, vice-versa. Synchronistic event rest on the simultaneous occurrence of two different psychic states. One is the normal, probably state (the one that is causally explainable) and the other, the critical experience, in the one that cannot be derived causally from the first.*<sup>105</sup>

Carl Gustav Jung, 1973

A famous example of this a-causal connecting principle is the following story from Jung’s own psychotherapy practice.

*A women in therapy dreamed of receiving a scarab pin. While she was describing the dream, Jung heard a bussing rap at the window. There, simultaneous with the woman’s story was a golden beetle similar to the Egyptian scarab beetle, which is a symbol of rebirth in the Egyptian mythology. This was an example of synchronicity in which a psychic state simultaneously occurs with an external event that coincides with the content of the state.*<sup>106</sup>

The relationship and world channels are considered composite channels, comprising aspects of the other channels. The more primary or Consensus Reality processes tend to communicate most commonly using the visual and auditory channels. The more secondary,

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<sup>105</sup> (Jung, Carl Gustav, 1963, p592)

<sup>106</sup> (Jung, Carl Gustav, 1963 p592)

NCR or deeper dreaming processes will often appear through signals in the other channels or in the paralanguage.

Other aspects of the world channel also include the influence of collective belief systems and experience that affect us consciously or unconsciously. Timespirits, historical influences, racism, sexism, homophobia and so on are all elements of the world channel, and affect us directly and indirectly. For example, no one is actually saying that women or men should behave in a certain way, there are many unspoken expectations that can be experienced as pressure, and whether or not anyone you know actually ever says anything directly. Our environment influences us and we influence our environment.

### 3.4. The Evolution of Processwork

*Signals: Until now (2002), my understanding of process theory has involved the study of such elements as awareness, signals, sensory-oriented channels, primary and secondary processes, double signals, edges, the process of amplification and unfolding.<sup>107</sup>*

*Amy Mindell, 2002*

While these remain extremely useful ways of framing and tracking phenomenological experience, the pattern behind them is more directly accessible through the lens of the essence level. Mindell returned to his studies of theoretical physics in the late 1970's and during this time he focused on quantum physics and in particular the theory of the quantum wave function, a mathematical equation that points to one of the basic patterns behind matter. It holds significance for the nature of parallel worlds, hyper space and the roots of perception and the link between Quantum Physics, Psychology, Shamanism and consciousness in physics. In his book *Quantum Mind: The Edge between Physics and Psychology*, Mindell speaks in depth about these themes. In this chapter I highlight the importance of parallel worlds in the evolution of process theory. As mentioned above, physics is seen as a metaphor for process. Mindell writes

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<sup>107</sup> (Mindell Arnold ,2002)

*Investigating the underground home and behaviour of matter as described in quantum mechanics and relativity involves two viewpoints, the everyday world of cosmopolitan reality and the world of dreaming.*<sup>108</sup>

Using the metaphor of Alice in Wonderland, he suggests that the growing edge of physics is to investigate not only the above ground experience as an objective observer but, like the rabbit in that tale, to go below ground and directly experience the world from a subjective perspective.

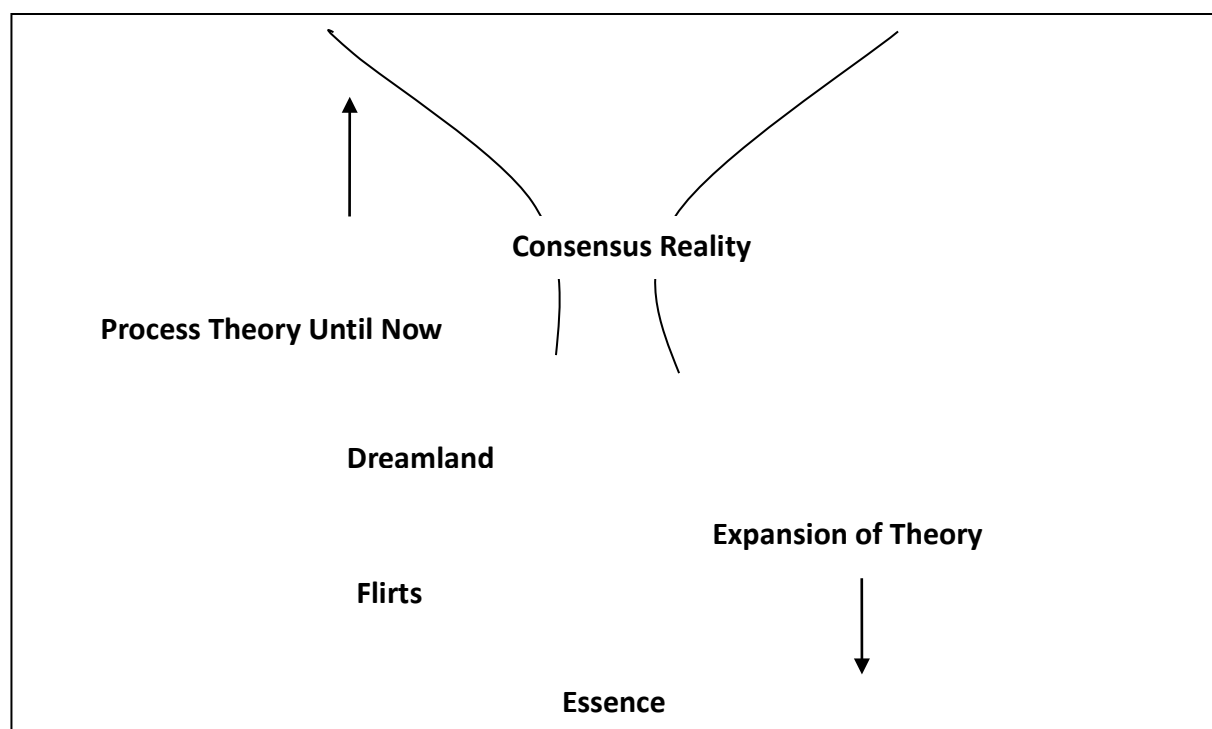
*Following the rabbit involves a shift in viewpoint, a paradigm shift, specifically, a shift from observer to participant. As long as you remain like a conventional physicist, you only photograph or catch glimpses of how the rabbit or particle appears above the ground. You remain in everyday states of consciousness where space and time are less significant than they are in ordinary reality. But to understand and experience matter, you must enter dreamlike experiences, altered states of consciousness where space and time are less significant than they are in ordinary reality. You will have to explore the roots of your perceptions. Then you, like physicists of the future, will be able to do experiments and have experiences that allow you not only to stay above ground, but also to understand the roots of perception, the roots of physics, and the basic nature of the universe. You will be combining areas of knowledge usually kept separate: shamanism, psychology and physics.*

The three dimensional map of reality in *Figure 4: Dimensions of Reality-evolution of Processwork, Amy Mindell* which introduces the essence level, speaks to this below ground level of subjective experience that colours our perception whether or not we are aware of it. Mindell posits here that if we are to become aware of the roots of our perception and consequently allow our perception to evolve to encompass the ordinary and non-ordinary dimensions of reality, we have to be willing to *jump into the soup of our experience*. We should not *just sit* on the riverbank observing the river with no direct experience of what the river is like from an experiential perspective. Applying this to conflict facilitation, or any kind of prejudice, if one is willing to stand in the shoes of the other, even for a few moments, and

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<sup>108</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2000, p 21)

really allow oneself to feel what it is like on the other side, it is very common that this subjective experience of *being the other* will shift one's perspective of the situation or problem. Taking this analogy further to encompass a three dimensional perspective, one is not just aware of the different experiences or view points, but simultaneously has a *meta-position* which allows one to experience the whole field of experience: the presenting issues and the *timespirits*; *ghosts* and historical influences that inform these perspectives; and perhaps, a sense of the deeper level of communication that is seeking expression in the moment. Later in this chapter I will discuss the concepts of *Deep Democracy* and *Eldership*, which speak to this experience in terms of Worldwork facilitation.



**Figure 4: Dimensions of Reality-evolution of Processwork, Amy Mindell<sup>109</sup>**

We can see from the diagram above that the expansion of Process theory occurred in order to include the essence level. Drawing on an article by Amy Mindell,<sup>110</sup> I will briefly recap the evolution of process theory below.

<sup>109</sup> (Amy Mindell, 2002.)

<sup>110</sup> (ibid.)

*In the initial phase of its evolution, Processwork studies centred around the elements of awareness, signals, sensory-orientated channels, primary and secondary processes, double signals, edges, the process of amplification and unfolding.*<sup>111</sup>

Amy Mindell, 2002

### **Following the Process**

Awareness and the ability to differentiate between the primary and secondary processes, to track signals, channels of communication and notice subtle feedback is central to the effectiveness of process orientated facilitation. The awareness of both the facilitator and the client is required. The client needs to become more aware of her everyday identity and consequently the more secondary or marginalised parts of her experience. Gaining an awareness of who is observing is central. The ability to become aware of the perspective of this *meta-position*, known in Jungian psychology as the integrating function, is essential. It is that part of the psyche which has an overview of, access to, and fluidity to move between, all the parts of the individual and, ultimately, collective mind. The meta-position has the ability to observe, or be aware of the different parts of inner and outer process, while at the same time being part of the field of experience.

Processwork differs from other schools of depth psychology in its view of the psyche; it does not see the conscious-unconscious as a rigid polarity. Instead there is a tendency for an experience to be seen as more or less conscious and that this can change over time, as well as from moment to moment.

In everyday society, adults often feel under pressure to present their views as a consolidated perspective of all the different parts of themselves, while, in fact for most of us, a more accurate representation would be to name and frame the different voices or perspectives arising within us. In his later works, Mindell speaks of the *superposition* of all the different parts being the closest to our myth or calling. This approach is very helpful as individuals and groups tend to get caught between one perspective and another, one closer to our identity (more primary) and one further away (more secondary). It is common for

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<sup>111</sup> (ibid.)

people to get caught in a debate that renders decision-making difficult and at times leads to complex splits between the different parts of ourselves or highly polarised conflicts with groups or between nation states. At the most extreme end of the continuum, this could be termed a psychotic state within an individual, or a fundamentalist or extremist world view.

*Developing an ability to notice, track, and unfold double signals is a fundamental tool of facilitation. Working with the double signals of another requires first gaining consensus, basically a contract, with that person to having her or his double signals worked with.<sup>112</sup>*

*Stanford Siver, 2006*

The above statement is equally relevant in a group context where it is important to seek agreement with the group to work with the implicit atmosphere or ghost roles that may arise in the process.

### **3.4.1. Edges to the unknown**

An edge can be thought of as a threshold between the more known and the less known parts of an individual or group. These edges tend to be comprised of unconscious belief systems which have been internalised from life experience. Some of these will primarily reflect personal experiences in our biographical history and others will be cultural belief systems; often, it will be a combination of both. For example, I have a primary identity these days as a competent Processwork teacher. In Consensus Reality, I have an increasing number of students who offer very positive feedback about the experience of studying with me. However, as I write this last sentence I notice how hard it is to celebrate this success. My body becomes tense as I type the words, and I become aware of various inner critics saying things like, “Well you are not that good”, or “One should not be big headed about these things” and so on. This is an example of an edge. It can be experienced in a variety of ways, including hearing voices of internal criticism, becoming tense, sweating, blushing, mouth suddenly goes dry, going blank, nervous laughter, the sensation of butterflies in your stomach, boredom, etc. Edges also become apparent through incongruent signals and incomplete movements, such as when someone changes the subject suddenly or suddenly

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<sup>112</sup> (Siver, Stanford, 2006 p 378)

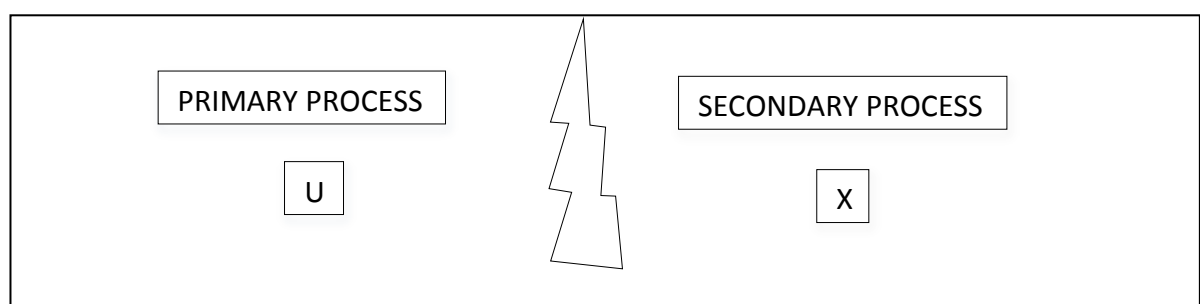
goes blank. Edges are reached when information or experiences arise that go against the primary process. The description above, of the success of my Processwork teaching in Spain, is in contrast to my primary process of often being deferential in an academic setting. As I reflect on this particular edge, I can see both cultural belief systems at work. During my upbringing it was considered inappropriate to celebrate one's success too openly; it was seen as a sign of egotism, or being 'big headed'. I also often carry a belief that I will never be good enough. I am not sure where this belief system came from, but it is what Mindell would call a *chronic edge*.

A chronic edge is generally thought to be a long-term process, possibly linked to historical influences and timespirits, whereas a short-term edge tends to emerge as a momentary obstacle.

Mindell describes an edge in the following way:

*The borders or barriers that exist to the eternal and continual flow of inner processes. In speaking, when we can no longer say something, we have reached a communication edge. An edge is a kind of threshold. Just as logs or rocks in a river give form to the river, edges give form to your inner processes. Edges are neither good nor bad; they simply divide us into different worlds. We know this because at one point or another, we feel we cannot go more deeply into an experience, insight, thought or feeling. We have reached an edge.*<sup>113</sup>

Arnold Mindell, 2000



**Figure 5: Primary and secondary processes as tendencies**

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<sup>113</sup>(Mindell, Arnold, 2000 p57)



This figure shows the primary process and the secondary process as directional tendencies, highlighting the fact that these are aspects of our identity, which are not fixed and can change over time, or in the moment. Crossing the edge is not the goal. The goal is to follow the process and bring awareness to the dreaming in the background.

The concept of the edge is central to Processwork. It lies on the threshold between the primary and secondary processes and is therefore connected to the world of duality on the Consensus Reality and Dreaming levels. As Process Theory evolved to include the essence level, Mindell introduced the concept of marginalization and the need to cultivate *third attention*, that which brings awareness to more subtle or flickering signals. For example, as I sit here, consciously focussed on revising this text, I am aware of both this point of focus, as well as distractive tendencies that might tempt me to make another cup of coffee, or check my email. If instead, I relax my eyes a little and focus more internally, I start to notice the sounds around me. A humming in my ears catches my attention (a residue symptom from a recent ear infection, which I have been unconsciously marginalising). As I focus on the sound, I notice I become more still on the inside, as if the sound has no barriers or edges and can subtly penetrate all space-time boundaries—it just *is*. If I bring this quality back into my present time activity, I notice as I sit and write that I feel more present and more aware of the context and deeper levels of meaning that emerge as I spend this time writing.

The process of marginalisation is neither good nor bad—it's neutral and central to the process of making choices. We constantly make choices about where we focus our attention. That upon which we do not focus our attention, is marginalised. This process of choice or marginalisation (the likes and dislikes, what draws and what does not) is often unconscious. As a facilitator who seeks to embody the principles of deep democracy, becoming aware of these processes is important. To become aware of the processes we can learn to track signals in the variety of communication channels, using our first, second and third attention.

This process of making choices and marginalisation applies to individuals and to a group—that is, it applies to any field of experience. Everything in the field results in multiple experiences, which the group are identified with or are not. Just as an individual often unconsciously sides with one part of their experience and marginalises or does not notice

those aspects of their experience that support their more known identity, making choices and decisions on this basis, so a group or collective behaves in a similar way.

### **3.5. Tendencies—U and X Processes**

#### **The Primary or 'U' Process**

- What a person or group already knows about itself.
- Statements such as “I am...” and “We are...” is how the group identifies.
- Primary process can be influenced by personal belief systems, cultural constructs, past experiences, etc.

#### **The Secondary/Minority or 'X' Processes**

- These experiences get less acknowledgement and are less known.
- They reside in or on the fringe of our unconsciousness and do not necessarily go along with the primary process, but disturb it, resist it and/or go against it.
- In the essence of the disturbance (from the perspective of the primary process) is something that is needed.

The U and X processes happen simultaneously and are not fixed. Both primary and secondary processes are important to our everyday functioning, survival and decision making. However, the tendency here is to marginalise or ignore the X processes, especially when they disturb us. Eventually however, this will lead to an escalation of polarisation of the field.

#### **3.5.1. Indicators of the X**

Unintentional signals indicate that an X process is trying to communicate. These unintentional signals include

- Body disturbances—an illness, ache, or even a simple symptom such as unconscious body language
- Relationship disturbances
- Hot spots, boredom, atmosphere and moods or moments of tension in group process.

### 3.5.2. Modes of Perception and Awareness

To perceive reality from a multidimensional perspective Mindell suggests that three modes of perception are needed. He describes these most recently in his book, *Dance of the Ancient One*.

*I often use the term first attention to refer to dealing with consensus reality, time, space, causality, medicine, signals, et cetera. For me second attention means becoming aware of unintentional things such as double signals, projections, dream figures, and the potential for role play. Finally, the third attention refers to a focus on altered, essence like states of consciousness.....third attention will notice no cognitive experiences and insights.*<sup>114</sup>

Arnold Mindell, 2013

### 3.6. Trauma and edges

*An edge is a communication block that occurs when an individual or group, out of fear, represses something that is trying to emerge.*<sup>115</sup>

Arnold Mindell, 1995

Most of us have experienced some degree of trauma in our lives, which may or may not have been experienced as life threatening. Nonetheless, the belief systems that influence us both personally and collectively are often informed by past traumatic experiences, whether or not we have been directly affected. For example, when I was travelling alone as a young woman, I increasingly felt unsafe, and eventually lost the confidence to travel in certain areas on my own. This experience was partially based on my experience of being in explicitly dangerous situations, where there had been an element of shock that I only spoke about many years later, and partly I think from the sense of imminent threat that grew out of my own experience and stories of others that began to influence my own belief systems.

In her book, *The War Hotel: Psychological Dynamics in Violent Conflict*<sup>116</sup>, Arlene Audergon, PhD., speaks about trauma in the following way.

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<sup>114</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2013 p184)

<sup>115</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 1995 p41)

*Trauma occurs around a great shock. At the point of shock, life as you knew it was interrupted, in your personal life or in the life of your community. The shocking experience may have betrayed a fundamental value. You may have been forced without control or choice. You may have been taken into a chain of unfolding events. You may have had to make an impossible choice, under threat and terror, risking not only your own life, but also the lives of your children, partner, friend or neighbours.....*<sup>117</sup>

Arlene Audergon, 2005

Audergon goes to describe this phenomenon in the following way.

*When there is trauma there is always an element of shock. After a shocking experience, part of us continues as if on automatic and part of us holds back. We continue in order to survive. Our primary or survival instinct continues on with what needs to be done, but often with a strange feeling of disconnection from ourselves or our surroundings. In the case of a sudden death of a loved one, we may get up the next day and continue with the daily routine, feeding the children, cleaning the house, but with a strange feeling of disconnection. In situations of sexual abuse, often one hears someone say that she continued with daily life, but with a strange sense of disconnection from herself. In these situations there is often no opportunity to deal with the shock, or express the pain, or outrage. A part of us simply gets "split off" or becomes more marginalized by our more primary identity. However, the impact continues to be felt, and will communicate through our less occupied channels, as nightmares, body symptoms, blanking out in certain situations, intense embarrassment etc. This survival mechanism allows us to function, but at high cost if not addressed.*<sup>118</sup>

Arlene Audergon, 2005

As we continue through our lives, there may be experiences of shock that are overlaid upon others. In my case, as outlined above, I continued for a long time to go forward, travelling long distances alone in remote regions. Yet the accumulated effect of a few threatening

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<sup>116</sup> (Audergon, Arlene, 2005)

<sup>117</sup> (Audergon, Arlene, 2005 p 175)

<sup>118</sup> (Audergon, Arlene, 2005)

experiences started to build up internally, and I no longer felt as free and relaxed in some remote regions as I once had. Interestingly, I felt particularly unsafe at night, close to roads and built-up areas, which unconsciously became associated with threat and lack of safety.

As mentioned in the previous section, we constantly marginalise certain experiences and choose to focus on others, these choices being organised by the lenses or unconscious filters and belief systems that sit at the edge between our known and unknown identity. The internal decision making process, about what to focus on, is often largely unconscious and influenced by edges, or the lenses through which we perceive reality.

In the case of trauma, the ability to marginalize certain experiences or memories can often allow us to function in the short term. However, in the long term these experiences will tend to surface, or affect us, for example through the symptoms known as post-traumatic stress disorder.

Even when an edge is identified, we are afraid of unfolding the information because we face the unknown and we do not know what we might experience. Mindell describes trauma, shock or abuse as an experience of being unfairly treated, physically or psychologically. Often, there is a rank differential where the person responsible was not aware of the rank and power that they had in that moment, and the victim was not aware of the lack of power that they had with which to defend themselves. This can lead to a feeling of hopelessness and inability to do anything about the situation or the way we feel about it. Often in working with these kinds of situations it is important to support the person who suffered to reconnect with their inner strength, even as a memory, in order to be able to face the situation. Mindell describes why it is important to face these disturbing experiences.

*Our individual biology and collective group life also tend to marginalise or forget shocking events and try to stop us from thinking about them....there is a positive side to not thinking about pain.... It is an*

*unconscious form of detachment. Yet, such repressive tactics can also make X or hurtful energy become stronger and reappear in symptoms.*<sup>119</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 2013*

Frequently addictions or addictive tendencies arise in response to shocking or traumatic experiences. Most of us have addictions to something: coffee, sugar, alcohol, drugs, shopping, TV and so on. In fact we live in an addictive society where advertising would have us believe that we will be happier, calmer and more fulfilled if we acquire certain things or if we drink a particular beer, buy a new set of clothes, watch a new TV series, etc. Sadly, these are all 'temporary fixes' and do not lead to long-term happiness or contentment. In the case of very disturbing experiences, people can find themselves addicted to substances and behaviours, which numb them temporarily. A person longs for that state that their substance of choice seems to offer. It might be that feeling of relaxation with the first drag on a cigarette or a joint, the sweetness and sensuality when thinking about eating a bar of chocolate, the light-headedness and light-heartedness or directness that is often experienced after a few beers.

We need that state, but the addiction does not quite fulfil the need satisfactorily and in the long run we increase the dose to self-harming levels or harm others without realising it. We become the abuser or X energy without awareness. This cycle can occur between individuals where abusive patterns of behaviour are passed on from generation to generation, and it can also be seen at the collective level, between genders, ethnic groups, religions, nation states and so on.

Many edges have cultural roots, which explains why certain behaviours are taboo in a particular culture and how these factors then collude in silencing abusive behaviour and perpetuating traumatic experiences. The recent exposure of the extensive sexual abuse that has taken place within the Catholic Church or by the famous UK BBC TV personality, Jimmy Saville, are examples of mainstream blindness that simply does not see what is happening. This blindness is an example of strongly held cultural belief systems that cannot imagine

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<sup>119</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2013 p136)

such atrocities happening in these contexts, even when the evidence is plain. It often takes a critical mass to influence the cultural belief systems, and for the timespirits to change. Even more extreme examples of this can be seen between nations, where the cycle of aggression, blame and revenge perpetuates the cycle of abuse and consequent trauma from one generation to another.

Collective trauma often happens when one part of a culture or society wants to move on, and the part of the society that experienced the mistreatment has no voice, as the description below of post Franco, Spain. Often it is the dominant part of the culture that wants to move on, not wanting to look at the privileges gained through the oppression or the long lasting effects of that situation. In this case the 'minority' group will be left with the story, recounting it over and over again. Eventually, this dynamic or injustice may lead to uprisings, retaliation or acts of terrorism. This is the same dynamic that occurs in an individual. The unheard voice will express itself indirectly through double signals or will somatise the experience, disassociate or self-harm.

I experienced collective trauma whilst working in Burma where I noticed that it was often difficult even amongst close colleagues at a senior level, to share disagreements or difficulties that they had with each other. When I spoke informally with the same people outside of the formal session time, after a meal together, they explained to me that they had lived their entire lives in a socio-political climate where it was unsafe to share honest disagreement with central policies. Many of them had undergone, directly or indirectly, terrifying and/or life threatening experiences. Often there were intelligence officers, or 'plants' in meetings, trainings and working in their organisations under cover. There was constantly the feeling that it was unsafe to express dissent. Even though there are many changes taking place in Burma now, and freedom of speech is increasing, these traumatic memories are still in the field. Many cases go unprocessed and still have no possibility of being addressed directly. In some areas the oppression, silencing and violence continue.

In Spain, a similar dynamic is experienced by the Catalan, Basque and Gallego groups. Although there has been a democratic government since 1976, the terms of the amnesty that freed political prisoners agreed after the death of the previous leader and dictator

General Francisco Franco (1939- 1975) also placed a ban on the indictment of any of those responsible for war crimes during the Francoist Spain era (1936- 1975). This ban has left many unresolved conflicts, unexpressed grief and anger in the collective psyche, leading to outbreaks of violent acts seeking revenge in some cases; a polarization between the centre and regional identities; many ghost roles and historical influences further polarising the field in the Spanish regions; and leaving many un-dealt with frozen states which are often passed on to the next generation to live out the unexpressed hatred, resentment, hurt and anger.

Often when we are able to face the disturbance, we find paradoxically that in its essence is a quality, which we need to live more fully. We need to address issues of abuse in our own lives—freeing us up to feel much more empowered and with greater choice. The need to tell the story and to reconnect to the event and the associated emotions that were unbearable, to be witnessed and to witness, is central to healing and moving on. That the stories not be forgotten; that whenever possible communication between the different parties be facilitated is key. The Truth and Reconciliation Commissions fulfilled this function in post-apartheid South Africa. They allowed a collective witnessing of past traumatic and abusive events and of the pain caused. This addressed at least in part, the need for accountability. Arnold and Amy Mindell, Arlene and Jean Claude Audergon, Max and Ellen Schupbach, and several other Processwork teachers have facilitated process-orientated forums in post conflict regions. They address these global hot spots of unresolved conflict and trauma around the world. These forums can be facilitated within government, between government and civil society groups, in NGO's, between organisations, groups, individuals and at the grassroots. They can also be very helpful in town meetings and between and within organisations—dealing with issues of collective trauma and other tensions that arise in communities of all sorts. They allow all the voices to be heard. Shifts in atmosphere can occur when one side is able to deeply hear and resonate, even if only briefly, with the opposing side or set of experiences.

### **3.7. Deep Democracy and Open Forums**

The term deep democracy was developed by Mindell in 1988 and first appeared in *Leader as a Martial Artist* (Mindell, 1992). In the late eighties, Mindell began to formulate these principles as a philosophical approach that he called Deep Democracy. Max Schupbach,



founder of the Deep Democracy Institute, and long-term colleague of Mindell, describes deep democracy below.

*Unlike "classical" democracy, which focuses on majority rule, deep democracy suggests that all voices, states of awareness, and frameworks of reality are important. Deep democracy also suggests that all the information carried within these voices, levels of awareness, and frameworks is needed to understand the complete process of a system. Deep democracy is an attitude that focuses on the awareness of voices that are both central and marginal. This type of awareness can be focused on groups, organizations, one's own inner experiences, people in conflict, etc.*

*Allowing oneself to take seriously seemingly unimportant events and feelings can often bring unexpected solutions to both group and inner conflicts. Deep democracy is a natural process that occurs in all community building processes, but often goes unnoticed or un-used. Just as conventional democracy strives to include all individuals involved in the political process, Deep democracy goes a step further in the effort towards fostering a deeper level of dialogue and inclusiveness that makes space for all people (with the individual right to vote) as well as all various and competing views, tensions, feelings, and styles of communication—in a way that supports awareness of relative rank, power, and privilege, and the potential of these forces to marginalize other views, individuals, and groups.<sup>120</sup>*

*Max Schupbach, 2009*

Deep democracy is a multi-dimensional framework and meta-skill, which is inclusive of central and marginal perspectives and recognises the importance of all living things. Consequently all voices refer not only to the human voices, but also the more subtle forms of communication and feedback that are present in the field. Awareness of subtle and overt signals and feedback is essential for the Deep Democracy facilitator. *Eldership* is the term coined by Mindell to describe the *meta-skill* stemming from this multi-dimensional, deeply

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<sup>120</sup>(Deep Democracy Institute, 2013)

democratic perspective. He speaks about the *crisis in eldership* in the world today being one of the gravest problems we have to face.

Deep Democracy is a feeling attitude toward life that appreciates all the voices and roles within a given group. It also recognizes the equal importance of consensus reality—everyday reality, the reality we all consent to as being real (facts, issues, problems, people), dreamland figures (feelings, roles, ghost roles—experiences talked about yet not represented) and the essence (common ground) that connects everyone.

Mindell insists that:

*For organisations, communities and nations to succeed today and survive tomorrow, they must be deeply democratic .....Deep Democracy is awareness of the diversity of people, roles and feelings, and a guesthouse attitude toward whatever comes to the door of one's attention. Positive organisational changes based on democracy's facts and figures do not work for long if they ignore our deepest feelings about the issues.<sup>121</sup>*

*Arnold Mindell, 2002*

One of the central tasks of this research is to reflect on this statement, and to demonstrate through examples (i.e. in the case studies) whether or not process orientated facilitation informed by deep democracy has significant impact in resolving conflict and tension and if so, in what ways. Learning how to facilitate using deep democracy underpins all the trainings that are mentioned in the case studies. Some of the key learning points that are central to this approach are:

- Recognising and exploring conflict, rather than avoiding or repressing it.
- Connecting with, and facilitating from your deepest self and knowing how to use inner experiences in organisations.
- How to use deep democracy when the stakes are high.
- How deep democracy can prevent conflict from escalating.

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<sup>121</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2002)

- How to work not only with the surface issues, but to explore the deeper underlying dreaming processes, organisational myths and stories in the background as part of the field that is informing the surface issues.

Deep democracy in its deepest sense, embraces an openness to the subjective experience of feelings and personal experiences, which are often excluded from rational public dialogue or conflict resolution interventions. R. Buckminster Fuller said:

*We need to support the intuitive wisdom and comprehensive informedness of each and every individual to ensure our continued fitness for survival as a species.* <sup>122</sup>

In her article on Deep Democracy (2004),<sup>123</sup> Patricia A. Wilson describes it as the inner practise of Civic Engagement, which is becoming an increasingly recognised field of practise, with many modalities. Known as *DIPs*, these *deliberative and inclusionary*<sup>124</sup> or participatory processes such as: *World Cafe*,<sup>125</sup> *Open Space Technology*,<sup>126</sup> *Voice Dialogue*<sup>127</sup> and Otto Scharmer's (2009)<sup>128</sup> *Theory U*, all facilitate face-to-face interaction and engagement between diverse stakeholders and perspectives. They aim to deepen the field of inquiry and facilitate the emergence of increased awareness and viewpoints. Deep Democracy adds a depth to these modalities in that it offers a map and tool kit which allows the facilitator to both read the field behind the presenting voices and draw out that which is more marginalised. It enables him/her to facilitate an interaction between these more marginalised or minority perspectives.

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<sup>122</sup> (Buckminster Fuller, R, 1981)

<sup>123</sup> (Wilson, Patricia A, 2004)

<sup>124</sup> (CSERGE, 2014)

<sup>125</sup> (World Cafe, 2014)

<sup>126</sup> (Open Space World, 2014)

<sup>127</sup> (Voice Dialogue, 2014)

<sup>128</sup> (Scharmer, Otto, 2014)

*From a systems perspective, deep democracy is an open dynamic system springing from the diverse points of engagement where individuals and community come together.*<sup>129</sup>

*Patricia Wilson, 2004*

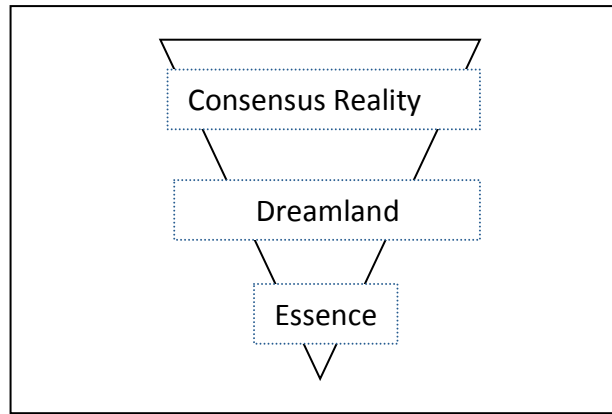
The word conflict evokes in many of us a sense of fear; most will avoid conflict whenever possible. Unfortunately this does not mean that the issues get resolved or that the conflict goes away. It simply means that the conflict or tension goes underground. It can generally be sensed in the atmosphere. Over time, more and more energy is consumed in order to avoid dealing with the underlying tension, and over time, the unaddressed situation will escalate, becoming more and more difficult to address. Examples can be seen across the board: in families, relationships, within ourselves, in organisations, within countries and between organisations and countries. For example, according to some sources global military expenditure in 2011 was more than US\$ 1.7 trillion and rising.<sup>130</sup> Never in the history of the world have we spent so much on our military, a force generally assumed to be there to protect us and our interests. Never has there been war in so many places at the same time, and yet, never has democracy been embraced by so many nations. Clearly, something is not working. This same dynamic can be seen on a smaller scale within ourselves, when we are paralysed by indecision, doubt or self-criticism. We can see it in our relationships and families where unresolved issues undermine, or wear away our felt sense of deep connection with one another.

In this time of escalating worldwide conflict in many areas and consequent impact on the wellbeing of our collective psyche and soul, Mindell suggests that deep democracy can contribute to a deeper felt sense of resolution, which ultimately, and in any context, supports a long term sustainable outcome. This can be understood better by referring to the three-dimensional map, and the subsequent sections of this chapter on field theory.

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<sup>129</sup> (Wilson, Patricia A, 2004)

<sup>130</sup> (Global Issues, 2014)



**Figure 6: Three Dimensions of Reality**

### 3.7.1. Leadership to Eldership

*Eldership is the ability to understand, empathize with, and support conflicted individuals or groups on all sides of an issue simultaneously and compassionately*<sup>131</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 1995*

Leaders often identify with the dominant style, dominant culture and dominant trends within a culture. They reflect the identity of the organization or group. This happens, in part, because they get ‘dreamed up’ by the organization, society, country, or world (i.e. ‘pulled’ by the field to fill a particular role). They are granted power as the assumed ‘expert’. From a Process perspective, however, leadership is only one role among many in an ever changing field. A leader embracing the perspective of deep democracy transitions from leadership to eldership. Eldership, according to Arnold and Amy Mindell, is a universal meta-skill—a feeling attitude with which one approaches life—arising from one’s deepest self and its direction.

*An elder, in a sense, is not necessarily a peace activist because an elder also supports the values and the beliefs and experiences, but not necessarily the behaviours, of everyone. Processwork considers eldership to be a role. That is, in any given interaction, you never know which*

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<sup>131</sup> (Mindell, Amy, 1995 p51)

*person may come forward and express great eldership. Because eldership is a role, Processwork does not see eldership as a quality of the facilitator exclusively but as something, which as any role, can and needs to be occupied at different times by others in the field.*<sup>132</sup>

*Stanford Siver, 2006.*

We see the leader transforming into the elder when she is able to access her deepest self and bring in the expanded perspective it gives her. In connecting the relevance of inner and outer work, she is an innate part of the overall process and facilitates the emergence of resolution from conscious use of her rank and privilege. When this happens we see her embody deep democracy as a universal meta-skill that informs her thoughts, words and actions.

*Eldership is the ability to understand, empathize with, and support conflicted individuals or groups on all sides of an issue simultaneously and compassionately*<sup>133</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 1995*

It has been suggested that eldership is leadership studied from an inner perspective. An elder, in a sense, is not necessarily a peace activist because an elder also supports the values and the beliefs and experiences, but not necessarily the behaviours, of everyone. Processwork considers eldership a role, like any role, that can and needs to be occupied at different times by others in the field. That is, in any given interaction, you never know which person may step forward to express great eldership.

Mindell has emphasised that eldership, with its associated facilitation skills, is scarce in the world today. Eldership is the ability to 'sit in the fire', not supporting any side of a given conflict and achieving a satisfactory agreement for all sides. Eldership and deep democracy can be described as universal, multi-dimensional meta-skills.

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<sup>132</sup> (Siver, Stanford, 2006, p20)

<sup>133</sup> (Mindell, Amy, 1995 p51)

### 3.7.2. Meta-skills

Amy Mindell (1995) uses the term meta-skill to refer to the feeling attitude, inner skills, beliefs, skill, technique, or tone used in performing an intervention. Curiosity or ‘beginners mind’ is an important meta-skill that communicates an openness to experiencing nature and watching it unfold in unexpected and often surprising and profound ways.

*Each paradigm fits a certain situation and provides important tools but Processwork uses the signals of the moment as an indication of how the process might be amplified, unfolded, and understood*

*Stanford Siver, 2006*

One of the most important meta-skills is metacommunication. The metacommunicator is the one that follows the process (Diamond & Spark, 2004). Metacommunication means expressing the emotion or the experience from an awareness perspective (instead of just expressing it).

*If you have an overview and realize that there are various states of consciousness, various frames of reference, you can “metacommunicate” about them. “Meta” means “about”, and “communicate” means to inform. If you metacommunicate, you can talk about your states of consciousness. You have a view of your own views and communicate about the consensus reality and non-consensus reality states of consciousness.*<sup>134</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 2000*

The awareness that is needed to communicate the different simultaneous multileveled experiences present, arises from being sufficiently detached to not get overly identified with one point of view, but to be able to move from one to another. For example when I am facilitating a difficult situation, where there are challenging emotions present, rather than taking one position or the other I might say something like, “I notice there are a lot of strong emotions present. Let’s go slowly and really make space for each side to be heard”. This is an example of meta-communication.

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<sup>134</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2000 p281)

Another important meta-skill in Processwork is curiosity about the mysterious—an openness to experiencing nature and watching it unfold in unusual and wonderful ways (Amy Mindell, 1995). Each approach fits a certain situation and provides important tools but Processwork uses the signals of the moment as an indication of how the process might be amplified, unfolded, and understood (Siver, 2006).

### 3.7.3 The Three Dimensions of Reality

The three dimensional map of reality, below, which Mindell first introduced in his book *Dreaming While Awake*,<sup>135</sup> is very helpful in that it structures the different dimensions of reality. It shows that all of reality emerges from the Dreaming or intangible levels of existence and that it is only possible to perceive all three dimensions by using first, second and third attention.<sup>136</sup> This three dimensional map of reality is a lens through which the Processwork facilitator or individual perceives their experience in the moment.

At the bottom of this map are the roots of experience that speak to the deepest dreaming or the Essence level (as described by Aboriginal Australians). In the centre of the picture, arising from the Dreaming, is what Mindell has called Dreamland and at the top of the tree like structure one can see everyday reality or Consensus Reality.

Consensus Reality (CR) is the dimension of everyday physical reality e.g. facts, figures, organisational roles, tangible issues. Social status or rank is derived from privileges linked to this dimension, such as level of education, gender, ethnicity, sexual preference, money and so on. Often this dimension is the only one that is considered in the design process, which leads to unforeseen difficulties arising when the designer is faced with a conflict that arises between stakeholders, or where newly built communities breakdown due to lack of social cohesion. This can be seen in housing estates all over the world. Power struggles and issues of rank lie embedded in everyday conflicts; position in a hierarchy is often at stake.

The Dreamland dimension encompasses the subjective, psychological and emotional aspects of reality. With awareness, we notice how what seem like real people and facts in everyday reality, are actually spirits of the times, roles and recurring figures. What might

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<sup>135</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2000 p15)

<sup>136</sup> See modes of perception: chapter 2



have an agreed upon meaning in consensus reality, such a mother or father, boss or employee, may well have very different subjective significance or association for the individual or group concerned. In dreamland, historical influences, timespirits, archetypal associations and personal and collective belief systems influence the lenses through which we perceive 'reality'. This dimension can be perceived often in the double or unintentional signals that highlight the background to everyday reality or presenting phenomenon. In dreamland, roles are non-local (spread out everywhere in the universe at any given moment). Therefore in dreamland, rank no longer has absolute significance. Rather, fixed CR rank and power become exchangeable, entirely relative and momentary.

Belief systems, cultural edges and internal criticism influence the lenses through which we perceive reality, thus altering our perception. By recognising the potential or the flickering of a thought or value that we often ignore or blame on others, we bring these lenses to awareness.

Subtle signals (e.g. shiver up the spine or sweaty hands) happen in the body and we have different ways of perceiving them (as body feeling, movement, visual, auditory (words, tone, sentence structure, pauses) and intuition). All of them indicate activity happening on the dream level.

The Essence Level is not measurable from a scientific perspective. At this 'non-dual' level of experience, the common ground within each dreamland figure and behind everyday reality, we sense a kind of oneness. There is no separation, only oneness, referred to by David Bohm as "unbroken wholeness". This sense of oneness is a common experience, not a fact in consensus reality. As part of living system, it is where we experience interconnection with the entire universe or living system of which we are part. In different traditions across the world it is referred to by different names: the Tao that cannot be spoken; the Buddha mind; Nature's intelligence; and the Nagual.

To conclude, this multi-dimensional map provides a framework for the facilitation of all the information in the field. This includes the unspoken atmosphere, unintentional signals of communication, such as style and tone of voice or body language, along with the presenting issues and dynamics of rank and power.

### 3.8. Worldwork

*Worldwork* began in the early 1990s as an annual international gathering for addressing socio-political issues. In these forums, principles and methods of deep democracy are applied. This type of *group process* can be focussed on the group culture as well as at a bigger scale (e.g. local context, social, global issues).

*Worldwork is a new paradigm for working with change within the complete spectrum of organizational and communal life. Its process-oriented view introduces new universal categories to describe and work with change and flow in organizations and the collective at large. It sees everyone as being simultaneously observers, participants, facilitators, followers and leaders; although at times, we might be identified with only one or a few of these roles. Worldwork allows analysis and facilitation of groups on a variety of different scales, from global processes to local events, and in the public space as well as in various organizational forms such as businesses, non-profit organizations, government agencies, religious communities, etc.*<sup>137</sup>

Max Schupbach 2014

A group process, a process orientated facilitation structure designed to draw forth the diversity in groups, is helpful because it brings awareness of things bigger than just the one voice. It is useful for working with complex situations like long-term conflicts and enables the development of fluidity between different roles.

#### 3.8.1. What to expect in a group process

The first step in a group process is often sorting or filtering the different themes that are being presented by the group. The facilitator supports the group to discover which issue has most energy and to reach a consensus to focus on it, by framing that which seems to elicit most energy or positive feedback. The group then identifies the main polarities, or roles within this and participants are encouraged to fill these roles and to interact, allowing the roles to deepen as content and personal material is expressed. This brings forth the diversity in the field. Information that is more or less identified with by the majority of the group

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<sup>137</sup> (Schupbach, Max, 2014, p1)

edges may arise. These moments of tension or *hotspots* need to be facilitated with care and may lead to shifts of atmosphere, or a felt sense of a momentary shared understanding or resonance with “the other side”. This is known as a temporary resolution and can support a deepening of relationship, and basis on which decisions on a more consensus reality level can be taken. Every group process will be different and styles of communication will vary depending on the group.

Add here—roles/ notes from WW notes re marginalization etc., roles, ghost roles,

### **3.8.2. Roles**

The concept of roles is drawn from the dreamland dimension of a group process. While in consensus reality each role that emerges in relationship to the chosen issue, such as the dominant one, the submissive or suppressed one, the helper, the boss, the employee and so on, are identified as one person generally, these are roles, archetypes of timespirits that need to be filled by many of us. In other words, each role is greater than any one individual or group, and each of us is greater than any role.

#### **Role Switching**

Most of us do not have a consolidated point of view about any given issue, but tend towards inner diversity and a variety of inner responses. This supports a natural tendency to role switch. We might find that we may identify with a particular role or perspective but in another moment we may feel pulled to represent another role, or find ourselves in another role. For example, someone in an NGO who is identified with helping others who are suffering, may start to speak about his or her own suffering. This is a role switch, and beginning to notice and allow yourself to switch roles is an awareness practice, and helpful as a facilitator to be able to imagine what it must feel like for both sides.

### **3.8.3. Hot Spots**

A hot spot is a ‘door’ to a deeper group process, to a lesser known part. Signals of a hot spot can be:

- When part of the group goes ahead and another part is paralyzed. One part does not see the door, or does not want to see the door. This reflects a type of group dynamic.

- When double signals are very intense, e.g. a person says “I am not angry”, and another person says, “You are angry”. Taking the process more slowly is necessary and asking the permission of the whole group to work with these two people. We know this is not something that belongs only to these two people and the resolution process will be useful for everyone.
- Change in the atmosphere.
- Everyone wants to speak at the same time.
- Sudden movements from one side to the other. When someone says something and no one wants to be in one side or the other.
- When rejecting or ignoring could create a strong reaction.
- Confusion.
- Strong personal feelings.
- General laughter.
- Sudden silence. Some silence moments are like shocks. Others are like a reverence for what is happening (a silence when everybody feels relaxed).

If there is a hot spot as a facilitator, usually the intervention consists of naming or framing it or going back and facilitating the process more precisely. Facilitation requires bringing awareness to the process, but not setting an agenda in order to unfold the process.

### 3.8.4. Rank

*The term rank refers to one's privileges in a given system or social/ interpersonal context. The term privilege refers to one's relative benefits and advantages. Bringing awareness to dynamics of our relative rank and privilege within both mainstream and marginalized groups is important for sustainable social change.*<sup>138</sup>

*Worldwork London, 2008*

#### What is rank?

In *Sitting in the Fire*, rank is defined as:

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<sup>138</sup> Material derived from World Work training: London 2008

*the sum of a person's privileges.....a conscious or unconscious, social or personal ability or power arising from culture, community support, personal psychology and/or spiritual power.....Whether you earned or inherited your rank, it organises much of your communication behaviour.*<sup>139</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 1995*

### **Types of rank**

*Social rank* is derived from measurable elements, some of which we inherit, such as ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class religion, education, health, age.

*Psychological rank* arises from feeling secure and cared for. It also comes from surviving suffering and emerging stronger and more compassionate. It may also come from awareness, self-knowledge, inner work or self-esteem.

*Spiritual rank* is independent of culture, family and the world. It comes from having 'justice on your side'. It may also come from a connection with something divine and transcendent that guides you and keeps you centred even in a storm. It sometimes frees a person from the worries that plague others.

*Contextual or Local rank* is the rank that a specific situation bestows on the person. This changes as soon as the context changes.

### **Rank and signals**

In general the more rank we have, the less we are aware of it. For example as a white woman I might not notice from moment to moment that some of my colleagues and friends are not of Caucasian origin. However, this does not mean that they do not experience racism in a primarily Caucasian environment. I take the privilege of my belonging to the mainstream for granted. Or as a woman, my experience of sexism in many of its subtle and not so subtle forms over the decades, is not necessarily shared or noticed by my male colleagues. Noticing signals of higher and lower rank, which fluctuate and change from moment to moment, according to context and momentary interactions, is an important

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<sup>139</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 1995)

source of information for the facilitator. Some signals of higher rank include determining how available you are to relate to others and what communication style you expect, tending towards being unemotional and rational. When relationship issues arise, you tend to think it is the other's problem, labelling the other as crazy, illogical, disturbed or angry and the tone can be detached, objective, condescending and patronising. A sense of high self-esteem and self-confidence tends to accompany the experience of high rank.

### **Signals of lower rank**

You have a tendency to say 'yes' but with double signals (i.e. you really want to say 'no') such as turning away, looking down, cramping, tightness and clenching. You are paranoid and may feel like you are crazy. You have a tendency to take things internally. You suffer low self-esteem and feelings of inferiority. There's a tendency to be emotional, upset, angry, feel misunderstood.

### **Unconsciousness of rank**

Most of us are unaware of our rank from moment to moment, particularly when we hold higher rank. It is usually those with less rank, who make those with higher rank aware of their status. When we are comfortable, we tend to take our high rank for granted and lose awareness of how others might feel around us. This is the case in all kinds of rank situations, whether they be social, global, spiritual or psychological. When we have a lot of global or social rank we are often not aware of the privilege and ease we have in the world and how others with less global rank don't share this. When we have spiritual rank we might not be aware that when we speak, we are so powerful that even those with global or social rank feel powerless.

For example, someone of high social rank needn't see, hear or feel the pain of those with less social rank. This privilege allows those with higher rank to then misidentify and emotionally split off parts of themselves as well. Someone of lower rank might also misidentify with others of higher rank and inadvertently dismiss their own inner or outer powers.

### **Rank and revenge**

Besides all of the various rank signals, which express our often-unconscious experience around rank, revenge is a common means of interaction where there are differences in rank. When we are hurt, feel put down or feel that our status is threatened; revenge becomes a way for us to hit back, acquire rank or keep the rank we have. Revenge can be a conscious or unconscious form of communication.

### **Freedom and rank**

It does not appear that we can simply eliminate the concept and feeling aspects of rank, however, we can be aware of rank dynamics and use differences of power and privilege for our mutual growth and learning. Interaction based on rank is really a fluid process asking for our awareness. The sense of power flips quite rapidly between people from moment to moment, as different kinds of powers are processed and experienced.

This kind of fluid awareness around rank is a freedom that we all might share. It is a freedom that goes beyond the definitions of rank and focuses on growth and relationship.

### **3.8.5. The Role as Facilitator**

Processwork theory states that what we experience internally as a facilitator is a reflection of what is happening in the group. This is why facilitators need to be more consciously aware of their internal tendencies. Nothing, as a facilitator, is entirely personal. When a person steps into the role of facilitator they also step into the field in this role.

Body symptoms, double signals, dreaming up—these are all indications of what is happening in the field. Educational systems, cultural imprinting, etc. have conditioned us to marginalise these things. However, if we can learn to trust these ‘irrational’ experiences, we can open up to and unlock much of what is happening in the field.

### **Dreaming Up**

Dreaming up refers to the effect of one person’s unintended communication signals on another. Someone is dreamed up when they respond to another person’s unintended communication signals without being aware of the signal that triggered their response. For example, two friends are chatting with each other, and one of does not notice the slight tension in the other person. She then unconsciously reacts to this tension by pulling away,

thinking perhaps her friend does not like her in that moment. This type of dynamic happens all the time, and yet usually we are not aware of it. Bringing awareness to the experience of being *dreamt up* and framing it can be very helpful to the facilitation of increased awareness.

The field holds different roles and points of view, rank and power dynamics, cultural belief systems, history, etc. In the case of a group process, we try to limit the field or scope of investigation to one theme and identifying which roles are in that particular theme or conversation.

Every field has parts that are identified with and parts that are more marginalised. When one of these marginalised roles becomes unoccupied and no one can bring voice to it, dreaming up can happen—to a facilitator or participant—unconsciously or consciously.

It is an important skill as a facilitator to be able to identify the ghost roles and give them voice. If the ghost role does not get voice—the process can simply cycle around and never be given voice. It is challenging to occupy a role fully, allow it to be dreamt up, and still remain as a facilitator. This is why it is important that everyone participating be able to share the facilitation role to some extent.

This is also why ‘inner work’ is so important as a facilitator. Inner work cultivates our awareness, helping ensure we do not get dreamt up or occupy roles unconsciously, and grows our capacity to ‘sit in the fire’—holding multiple roles without attachment to any.

### **3.9. The Influence of Modern Physics**

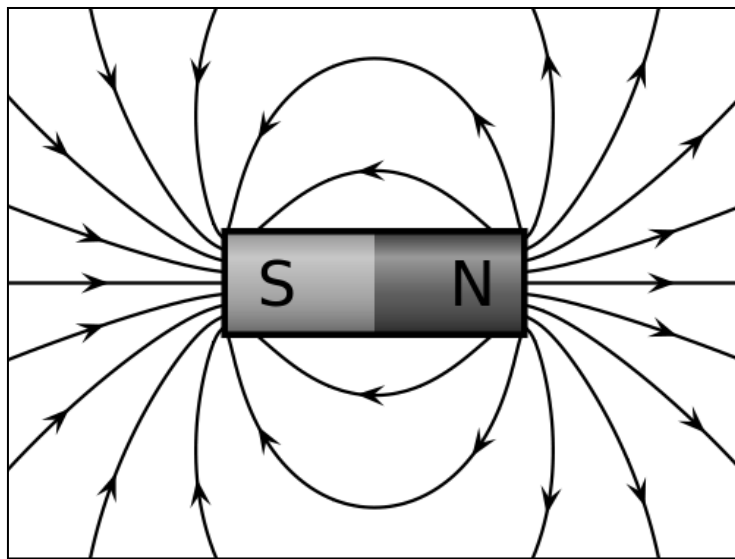
#### **3.9.1 Field Theory**

Field theory enables the understanding of roles and group process. The word *field* describes several things including: the green pasture where cows or sheep graze peacefully; a field of oats; an area of study such as design or psychology; or an arena where team sports are played. In these examples, the word ‘field’ describes an area within which activities are organised and structured and where certain rules or codes of conduct apply.

*Fields organize and structure given areas..... The magnetic field is a typical physical field. It describes how magnetic forces extend throughout*



*the space around a magnet. The field is strongest near the magnet: it has many lines of force there. The field is weakest far away in space; it has fewer lines of force. (see Figure 7). Magnetism is an invisible force field that influences little pieces of iron, which are pulled and pushed about near the magnet. Like magnetic fields, the gravity field of the earth cannot be seen, yet we all feel it pulling us down when we try to jump into the air.*<sup>140</sup>



**Figure 7: Electromagnetic Field<sup>141</sup>**

Mindell goes on to describe field concepts in the context of ancient traditions. He speaks about the Tao being understood in ancient Chinese thought as a pattern that informs everyday life. The Tao was thought of as field, much like Figure 7 above, with a force field of “dragon lines”, which were understood to affect the wellbeing of people but also geology and geography. It was a multi-dimensional perspective, which included the tangible and physical along with the more subjective, subtle experiences such as a sense of wellbeing. In the context of a group process, the field will organise the roles, rank dynamics, ghost roles and so on. A field in this sense is local and also non local. For example, in the Bolivian case study in Chapter 5, I facilitate a process between a peasant farmer and a representative of a

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<sup>140</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2000 p80)

<sup>141</sup> (Wikipedia, 2014)

multi-national coffee producer. The roles present in the field in that moment were not just the peasant farmer and multi-national company representative, but also the historical events of 500 years of colonisation, which were strongly felt. There were behavioural and cultural expectations on the peasant to behave in a subservient way. The company representative was expected to assume the right of leadership. And there were internal struggles in both as they confronted each other. The presenting issues were whether or not the peasant's business plan was solid enough to constitute a real alternative to company ownership, but also the internalised belief systems, habitual and unconscious that reinforce the status quo. In other words, the issues being addressed in that moment between these two actors were not only specific to this particular situation, but were influenced by the historical and cultural context or field.

This example shows why it can be so helpful to realise that the presenting issues—the business plan in this case—are in many ways the 'tip of the iceberg'. For a long lasting sustainable solution to be implemented, the ghost roles and/or unrepresented, often non-local, roles must also be addressed.

### 3.9.2 Unified Field Theory

The evolution of Processwork, as reflected in the sequence of Mindell's books mentioned above, culminates in his latest works, *Process Mind* (2010), *Quantum Mind* (2013), and *Dance of the Ancient Ones* (2013). A common thread to all these texts is *unified field theory*. Mindell refers to this universal unifying field as the *processmind* in his book of the same name. He describes it as follows:

*The processmind can be experienced as a kind of force field. It is an active, intelligent "space" between the observer and observed. It is both you and me and the "us" we share. It is connected to the facts of everyday reality but also independent of them.*<sup>142</sup>

Arnold Mindell 2010

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<sup>142</sup> (Mindell Arnold, 2010)

In many, if not most, traditional cultures of the world there are belief systems, myths and direct experience that point to a unified field. In his book *The Spell of the Sensuous* (1997), David Abram describes the Navajo elders' understanding of the reciprocal relationship between their people and the animate cosmos, which enfolds and includes them.

*For the Navajo, then, the Air—particularly in its capacity to provide awareness, thought, and speech—has properties that European alphabetic civilization has traditionally ascribed to an interior, individual human “mind” or “psyche”. Yet by attributing these powers to the Air, and by insisting that the “Winds within us” are thoroughly continuous with the wind at large—with the invisible medium in which we are immersed—the Navajo elders suggest that which we call the “mind” is not ours, is not a human possession. Rather, mind as Wind is a property of the encompassing world, in which humans—like all other beings—participate. ... one’s own intelligence is assumed, from the start, to be entirely participant with the swirling psyche of the land. Any undue harm that befalls the land is readily felt within the awareness of all who dwell within that land. And thus the health, balance and well-being of the enveloping early terrain<sup>143</sup>.*

*David Abram, 1996*

Abram goes on to show that, although Europeans might primarily think of the psyche as a characteristic of an individual rather than the world of which they are part, etymological research has shown ancient connections in the language. The English term psyche, and its derivations such as psychology, psychiatry and psychotherapy...

*...is derived from the ancient Greek word “psyche”, which signified not merely the “soul” or the “mind”, but also a “breath” or “gust of wind”. .....another ancient Greek word for “air, wind, and breath”—the term “pneumatic”, from which we derive such terms as “pneumatic” and “pneumonia”—also and at the same time signified that vital principle which in English we call “spirit” .....*

*David Abram, 1996*

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<sup>143</sup> (Abram, David, 1996 p136)

The concept of the unified field appeared in modern day politics recently when Barak Obama referred to *Ubuntu*, a traditional African concept, meaning '*I am because you are*', at the funeral of Nelson Mandela. *Ubuntu* is cultural recognition that we are all bound together in ways that are invisible to the eye.

### 3.9.3. System Mind/ Processmind

Mindell refers to this unified field concept as the *system mind* in his book *Dance of the Ancient One*.<sup>144</sup> Access to it can be achieved through going deeply into our feelings, our movements, and imagination. To be able to facilitate from a whole systems perspective, it is necessary to access the system mind, which encompasses the entire field, and not just one side or another. The system mind is a kind of organising intelligence that informs the field, such as that described in James Lovelock's Gaia theory. Access to this *meta-position* enables the facilitator to find a detached viewpoint and access all the information in the system, including the relationship and flow between the diverse components of the system. This can lead to longer term sustainable solutions. As an example, Mindell describes a solution to a need for power that is proposed without a system mind or overview perspective. In the short term, building a nuclear power plant to resolve an energy shortage could seem like the ideal solution, however over time, as leaks, Tsunamis or earth quakes occur, this shorter term solution may turn out to not be such a good idea. From a system mind perspective, the longer cycles of life have not been taken into account, when building something involving radioactive materials with a very long life span. Processmind is a term developed by Mindell to describe the system mind.

Mindell suggests that this organising intelligence or processmind can be thought of as the '*dance of the ancient one*'. Each of us has it within us. On the dual level of the essence, ultimately there is no separate "I". We are all part of, and consequently moved by, the universe itself and the intelligence that informs it. Mindell's more recent developments in Processwork all point to this.

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<sup>144</sup> (Mindell Arnold, 2013 p5/168)

### 3.9.4. Processmind in Relationships

C.J. Jung suggested that patterns for our life-long personal development can be found in our childhood dreams. Mindell adds to this, suggesting that the organising pattern or story of our relationships can be seen in our first feelings or encounters with ‘the other’, whether they be a person or organisation.

*The first story, dream, or myth of a friendship is partly a deterministic map. It predicts the big things, but the moment to moment way it operates in reality can't be entirely predicted. The processmind appears as the story pattern behind organisations, but it can't tell exactly when or what will happen. .... The processmind of an organisation is the essence of or feeling behind the story. It is the space, the atmosphere, between us.*<sup>145</sup>

*Mindell, 2013*

At the deepest essence level of experience, Processwork deals with the subtle dimension of reality and the tendencies emerging from this non-dualistic, dimension through training our awareness to perceive flickering signals and dreamlike tendencies which are not easily expressed in words. This dimension can often be perceived more as a subtle atmosphere around and within people, organisations, events and regions of the planet. The system, or processmind, seems to manifest as a non-dualistic intelligence from the dimension of reality. In quantum physics Heisenberg called the subtle tendencies that emerge from this dimension as the quantum wave function. David Bohm called this the pilot wave. C.G. Jung referred to this subtle guiding function as our individual or collective myth, or central organising principle. Processwork suggests that an individual, relationship, organisation or even an entire living system has an emergent pilot wave, self-organising principle or tendencies towards evolution that informs its path. When we feel ‘on track’ in our lives this is a sign that we are connected to the bigger guiding principle or myth. Processwork facilitates the individual, relationship or organisation to become aware of these subtle tendencies that indicate and inform its emergent direction.

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<sup>145</sup> (Mindell A., 2013, p 168)

Jung coined the term “life myth” to describe a patterning for life-long personal development. He found that childhood dreams, which can still be remembered in adulthood, reveal an archetypal or mythic pattern for a person’s life.

*Mindell extended Jung’s work on life myth and childhood dreams by proposing that patterning for a person’s life can also be seen in recurrent and long-term experiences like chronic illness, symptoms, addictions and relationship patterns. Mindell sees a life myth as a form of “psychological inheritance,” which includes tendencies related to parents, ancestors, cultural context, and historical background. A person can work with a life myth consciously and creatively, instead of being unconsciously propelled by it.*<sup>146</sup>

*Diamond & Spark, 2004*

Mindell’s hypothesis is that what we choose to marginalize or include as part of our primary focus arises via a self-organizing principle, which is connected to our life’s myth, calling or pilot wave. The long-term belief systems that influence our perception and consequent perspective are referred to as long term or chronic edges.

### **3.9.5. Vectors and flirts**

In the Processwork framework, every vector (X and U as mentioned above, or PP and SP) is a part of us. A vector leads to a direction. Sometimes a person is identified with a particular direction and marginalizes the other ones. Inner work can help us to explore other directions, pointed out by flirts.

Amy Mindell (2002) describes flirts as tiny pre-signals that do not persist long enough to be identified as signals. She places them somewhere in between Dreamland and Essence. Just above the essence level we find the area of flirts. Flirts are the first way in which the essence world arises. The essence world appears as quick, flickering nonverbal sensations, visual flirts, moods, and hunches. Such experiences occur very rapidly such as, for example, our attention being caught for a split second by the brilliant colour of a flower. These flirt-like experiences are of such brief duration, that we normally do not hold on to them long

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<sup>146</sup> (Diamond, Julie; Spark Jones, Lee, 2004, p148)

enough to help them unfold and come into consciousness. They are fleeting and non-consensual.

### 3.9.6 Ethics and Feedback

Ethics are central to working with clients (a person or group), and ‘feedback is the ethical regulator’<sup>147</sup> of the Processwork respecting feedback. Positive feedback in the context of Processwork refers to the intensification of a signal in response to an intervention. Negative feedback refers to a decrease or lack of noticeable response in response to an intervention. Positive and negative feedback are neither good, nor bad, they simply provide information about the next step in unfolding the clients process.

## 3.10. Central assumptions in Processwork

This chapter has been an introduction to Processwork. This section offers a brief recap of some of its central concepts and the theory referred to in my research. A glossary of Processwork terms can be found on page xiii, where more definitions can be found.

Processwork is an interdisciplinary approach, framework and methodology for unfolding the deeper meaning in a wide range of human experience. It follows and unfolds experiences in the moment through tracking signals, somatic experience and synchronicities. It is considered an awareness practise.

### Key concepts within Processwork

- *The Observer*: The position of observer is not thought of as an objective fixed viewpoint, as one might find in a Newtonian world. Rather, it takes the Quantum concept of observer, which assumes a subjective, non-objective perspective in which what is perceived is influenced by the lenses through which the observer perceives.
- *Processwork does not have a goal of change*. The goal is awareness. The philosophy that underpins this perspective has its roots in Taoism where every person is inherently drawn toward alignment with nature, or nature’s intelligence. Mindell would call this the Process Mind,<sup>148</sup> suggesting that there is a river to be followed

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<sup>147</sup> (RSPOPUK, 2013, p37)

<sup>148</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

that will show the way. Further, the self-organizing principle or mind of the system or individual will inform the direction as long as the belief systems or edges do not unconsciously inhibit this process. Hence the importance placed on working with disturbances, which arise. Processwork focuses signals, the pattern behind them and unfolding the meaning found in them.

- *Change is not the goal, however change can emerge from following and unfolding the process.*
- *Following the flow of process.* This implies accepting what is happening in the moment and not resisting and holding onto the absurd and impossible.
- *Differentiating the flow of process.* Mindell describes three dimensions of reality as part of the flow (consensus reality, dream level and essence level) and differentiates between the better known and the less known part of the flow.
- *Noticing and unfolding a process.* This implies a differentiated awareness, which Mindell also frames as:
  - *first attention*—to refer to interacting with consensus reality or the more quantifiable dimension of reality,
  - *second attention*—meaning becoming aware of unintentional communication signals, projections and dream figures such as inner critics or ghost roles...
  - *third attention*—which will notice subtle signals, non-cognitive experiences and insights.
- *In order to notice the process,* we follow signals that are messages expressed in different channels of communication.
- *Meta-skills for following the process.* Meta-skills are the feeling attitudes and fundamental beliefs about life, which permeate and shape all of the facilitator's skills and interventions. These 'skills' are central to Processwork and can be studied and cultivated.
- *The metacommunicator,* known in Jungian psychology as the integrating function—the part of the psyche which has an overview of, access to, and the fluidity to move between all the parts of the psyche (individually and ultimately collectively). It is essential and is the one that frames the process.



- *Processwork assumes an interconnected worldview* where diversity is an essential component. Consequently, the internal experience of the facilitator is considered a source of information about the field they are facilitating, and visa versa.
- *Deep democracy and eldership*, with its awareness of the diversity of people, roles and feelings and the field is needed for sustainable change.
- *As part of the field*, the facilitator must learn to track their own internal experiences as information for the whole system.
- *In the essence of the disturbance*, when unfolded with awareness we can find the meta-skill needed to address the disturbance itself.
- Processwork uses the information of the entire system

## Chapter Four: Methodology & Methods

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This chapter describes how workshops, unstructured interviews and feedback sheets were used as a method of collecting data in the four diverse case studies carried out in varying settings worldwide. It describes the methodology of how the Processwork theory outlined in Chapter Three was applied to the case study findings in Chapter Five and Six.

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### 4.1. Methodology

The principle methodology used in this research is that of Processwork. Chapter three is devoted to explaining the theory and practice of Processwork, which is the methodological lens through which I have conducted and analysed my case studies. The multidimensional lens of deep democracy with its braided methodology facilitates awareness of the *parallel worlds* present in any interaction. As described in the preface – often the facts, feelings about the facts and deepest longing that informs the entire process become mixed up into a soup, or knotted hair braid (as it were). We often become hypnotised by the presenting issues or content only, marginalising unconsciously all other sources of information, such as the atmosphere, body language, tone of voice, the dynamics of rank and power which may be influencing the communication structure and so on. The *braided* methodology drawing on deep democracy, described as a metaphor and facilitation tool, endeavors to frame the different dimensions, offering a language and structure that differentiates the strands, braids or dimensions, making all the information within the system accessible, and consequently potentially leading to a longer term, sustainable outcome. As you will see in Chapter five – this methodology can be applied in many different settings. It allows the content of presenting phenomenon to be addressed along with its underlying role structure. The different strands can be framed and addressed one at a time, and often an edge will arise when the next strand starts to emerge. For example, in a cycling group conflict focused on the pay scale for promotions in a large corporate organization I was working in recently, there was an escalated degree of tension between those who identified more with senior

management and in turn responsible for the financial success of the organization, and those who were on the shop floor, who were experiencing hardship due to the freeze in salary increase since the financial crisis, and change in market a few years ago, which affected global sales of their computer products. The conflict resolved momentarily at least, when one of the senior managers, instead of speaking rationally and trying to resolve in a somewhat patronizing manner, the issue by describing more and more facts and figures, he spoke passionately about his love for the company, how much he believed that in spite of the difficulties, that it would continue to grow and flourish, be in the leading edge position it has occupied in the past, and at that moment – the worker on the other side of the table, sat down, and he shared how the difficulty he and his colleagues had, was not just about the actual money – but also about feeling valued. This demonstrates – how when only one strand was focused on the conflict did not resolve, but when the next strand, that was more subjective, conveyed in tone of voice, body language, atmosphere, and speaking to the even less tangible strand from which meaning, purpose and the motivational roots are derived, the polarized situation shifted, to more of a shared experience. This type of experience builds relationship, and in my experience forms a stronger platform on which to then build the next steps.

## **4.2. Methods**

My main research method is the use of Case studies. These are defined as in-depth investigations of a single person, group, event or community. The data was collected from several case studies, and related theoretical frameworks, using different methods such as observations, interviews, feedback sheets and questionnaires. The case study research method has its origins in clinical medicine, (the case history, i.e. the patient's personal history).

### **4.2.1 The Case Studies**

These are all independent of one another but interdependent in the sense that they are all analysed through the lens of Processwork. These case studies are not a random sample, but rather a selection of case studies set in diverse regional and cultural contexts where I was invited to facilitate training programmes using a Processwork approach. The conclusions

from each case study are reviewed in Chapter five and in Chapter six in relationship to the research aims and objectives outlined in Chapter one.

#### 4.2.2 The Case Study Method

*The case study is not itself a research method, but researchers select methods of data collection and analysis that will generate material suitable for case studies such as qualitative techniques..... (semi-structured interviews, participant observation, diaries), personal notes (e.g. letters, photographs, notes) or official document (e.g. case notes, clinical notes, appraisal reports).<sup>149</sup>*

*Saul McLeod, 2008*

Applying this method involves providing detailed descriptions of the behaviour being studied. This is obtained from observation, semi-structured interviews, feedback sheets, photographs, transcripts and follow up conversations on email and skype with some participants from the courses. The analysis of this information is carried out through the lens of Processwork. This study endeavours to include accurate information on the consensus reality or structural level, as well as information from the observation of the unintentional signals of communication, and other subtle signals<sup>150</sup>.

The strength of using case studies in this research is that they can provide very detailed qualitative information thereby facilitating investigation of highly interactive, and at times deeply personal situations. They also are helpful in illustrating Processwork theory and its application in the case study contexts. Some of the limitations of this method are that it is difficult to subsequently generalise the results of the research to the wider population and that the researchers own feelings or bias could influence the case study.

The case study method involves simply observing what happens to, or reconstructing 'the case history' of a single participant or group of individuals (such as a school class or a

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<sup>149</sup> (McLeod, Saul, 2008)

<sup>150</sup> An indicator, generally in movement, language, verbal tone, or other nonverbal signal, that carries meaning. See Chapter three for more information.

specific social group), i.e. the idiographic approach.<sup>151</sup> Case studies allow a researcher to investigate a topic in far more detail than might be possible if they were trying to deal with a large number of research participants (nomothetic approach) with the aim of ‘averaging’.

### 4.2.3. Workshops

Workshops were the central activity in each case study. This highly participatory method is comprised of didactic presentations of Processwork theory, demonstration and practise of experiential exercises, the facilitation of a felt sense of the ideas being presented, interactive and awareness raising reflective exercises and small and large group exercises and discussions. To anchor the learning process, each day would begin with a 10 minute presentation by different small groups of participants who would recap the previous day’s input using creative means such as imagining they were giving a radio interview.

The workshops were between 3—7 days long. Each day I would begin with an outline of the curriculum that we would cover that day. Given the holographic nature of the methodology, every workshop would have an inner work component focussing on the theory and practise of self-reflective techniques; relationship and communication skills & systemic approach to working with small and large groups. The presentation techniques included flip chart presentations, discussions, short lectures, participative processes, movement based games and exercises with hand outs describing the steps of each exercise.

### 4.2.4 Unstructured interviews

I conducted a number of unstructured interviews with workshop participants in which the questions were not prearranged. These were conversations to spontaneously unfold key insights or points of particular interest from the perspective of the interviewee in relationship to their experience with Processwork. Rather than more formally reporting their experiences, the interviewees were supported to reflect on and perhaps re-access the insights that they had had, and even to gain further insights during the unstructured

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<sup>151</sup> This is one of the main philosophical debates in psychology. The term “**nomothetic**” comes from the Greek word “*nomos*” meaning “law”. Psychologists who adopt this approach are mainly concerned with studying what we share with others. That is to say in establishing laws or generalizations. The term “**idiographic**” comes from the Greek word “*idios*” meaning “own” or “private”. Psychologists interested in this aspect of experience want to discover what makes each of us unique.

interview. Given the personal and subjective nature of many of the experiences shared this, less formal style of interview, facilitated a good rapport between the interviewee and myself, given its parallel to a normal conversation or Processwork session.

#### **4.2.5 Feedback and Feedback Sheets**

The feedback sheets consisted of simple questionnaires asking what the participants found particularly helpful, and what elements of the training programmes could have been better from their subjective perspective. I only requested written feedback from the participants of the two-year training programme in Zaragoza. In the other training programmes the feedback from the participants was facilitated as a short self-reflection at the end of each day where the participants had the opportunity to reflect on what had been particularly useful for them that day, and then to share this with a partner within the group. Every other day, there was space in the large group for participants to speak about their own experience, to make requests or give feedback. I also encouraged the participants to either speak to me personally in the breaks or to the workshop organisers if there was anything that they were unhappy with. This diverse approach to gathering written and /or verbal feedback was influenced in part due to the language constraints of working with participants in the Thai language (which the researcher does not speak) and working with Bolivian campesinos some of whom could not read and write in Spanish or *Aymara*<sup>152</sup>. From a dreaming level perspective a request to give written feedback can put the participant in an awkward position where they feel that they must respond in a particular way. Participants are unlikely to express the full spectrum of their experience in the written form. For this reason it was considered a more accurate method to record their feedback by observing and taking into account the body language, tone of voice, and degree of congruity with which the participants shared their experiences during and at the end of the training programmes.

#### **4.3. Observation**

The method of observation I used primarily in this research was to take notes on the comments of contextual and related information. Such as, when our Bolivian organisers described the problem that they were having with the participants. I would write down this

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<sup>152</sup> One of the main languages spoken by the participants in the Bolivian case studies, as well as Quechua

kind of information, and then, using the Processwork multidimensional lens of deep democracy analyse the data and create a structural analysis of the situation. This would inform my interventions as a facilitator when making suggestions to the course organisers and when facilitating the workshops with the participants. The Processwork approach analyses not only the presenting phenomenological data (presenting issues), but also analyses sentence structure based on the digital or intentional content of the communication and the analogue, or unintentional para-linguistic phenomena, i.e. tone of voice, body language, unintentional sounds or emphasis in the communication. One of the central assumptions in Processwork is also that the observer is not objective, but part of the system. This is based on a quantum concept of how we define the observer, not as a fixed position as in Newtonian physics, as a static point outside the system, but as an observer function within the system. From this perspective the observer's presence within the system influences it and is influenced by it. For this reason Processwork places such importance on developing a meta-position and an ability to frame all the roles, to track the conscious and unconscious communication signals in their various channels of communication and be aware of the dynamics of rank and power and unoccupied ghost role or time spirits which may be present.

#### **4.4. Limitations**

One of the limitations of this research is that I did not record or film the workshops, and therefore had to rely on notes and photographs. However—in the workshops in Thailand I do have manuals, which were based on notes taken during my presentations. (available as separate documents). In hindsight it would have been ideal to have had more recordings of the workshops, as I would have had a more accurate record of all the proceedings. However, on the positive side, often participants can feel inhibited when a workshop is being recorded, and usually I would tend not to record the interactive parts of the sessions.

#### **4.5. Auto ethnography**

I have also used auto ethnography, a form of self-reflection and writing that connects my own experience with the wider cultural, political, and social meanings and understanding. Auto ethnography focuses on the writer's subjective experience rather than, or in interaction with, the beliefs and practices of others, in that auto ethnography focuses on the

writer's subjective experience rather than, or in interaction with, the beliefs and practices of others. As a form of self-reflective writing, auto-ethnography is widely used in performance studies and English.<sup>153</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> (Qualitative Research, 2014)



## Chapter Five: Case Studies & Associated Findings

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In Chapter Five, four diverse international case studies are presented. These range from activities carried out with female and male Spanish lawyers to Bolivian farmers and Thai monks. Each case study is composed of an outline background context, description of activities carried out with participants and real episodes and feedback from the case studies themselves. This is followed by an analysis of situations that occurred using Processwork methodology and presentation of the resulting conclusions. In line with the four aims, particular focus is placed on identifying belief systems which prevent or hinder the perceptual shift (at an individual, local and global level) away from a fragmented worldview towards a holistic interconnected worldview.

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### **Bolivia | Thailand | Spain | Global Eco Village Network**

#### **Organisations & Groups Overview**

I have been running trainings and carrying out corresponding research with a broad spectrum of organisations between 2009 and 2012. These groups range from the grassroots sector, such as leaders of Burmese ethnic minority groups in Burma, civil society leaders and activists in Thailand and indigenous Bolivian farmers and their communities, to the senior management and project teams of NGOs and not-for-profit organisations working to promote bio-cultural diversity in the regions where these people live and work, and elsewhere. In Thailand, the programmes were also attended by several Buddhist monks, Abbots, Nuns and professors from the department of Contemplative Education at Majidol University, Bangkok.

I will also draw on case studies from sustainable human settlements from the Global Eco-village networks that have emerged in 2012, and two cases from institutional and entrepreneurial sectors conducted with a group of lawyers in Zaragoza (Spain, 2010).

I will focus particularly on the social design of these projects and include an emphasis on leadership training, facilitation skills and skills for working with diversity issues, such as

racism, sexism as well as techniques that bring the concept of human and environmental rights into a lived and felt experience. My methods will consist of facilitating and running participative training programmes, including Training of Trainers (TOT) for national and regional leaders, local programmes and hopefully facilitating the emerging voices from these trainings to engage further with national and international bodies which are emerging in various parts of the globe in response to the uncertain future we collectively face at this present time.

I have conducted a series of in-depth unstructured interviews with a cross-section of key proponents in this field. The interviews were based on the following research question posed to the clients. “What are the most significant contributions that Process Work has made in your personal experience and in your work?” Over and above this more general question, the crosscutting objectives of the research, as outlined at the end of Chapter One are:

- To examine the influence of the belief systems that form our thinking and design processes.
- To examine the importance of deep democracy and Processwork methods in the facilitation of Social Change, in particular the role of women and other groups marginalised by historical influences, time-spirits and personal and collective belief systems.
- To illustrate the importance of process orientated *inner work*, (unfolding the inherent meaning in previously marginalised signals), in the facilitation of culturally diverse situations.
- To examine the background structural roles and dynamics of rank, power and privilege and the importance of including unintentional communication signals in the facilitation of conflict and diversity issues.

To conclude I will use a Processwork approach to facilitate these interviews and subsequent discussion, which may emerge. My hope is that the outcome of this research will be to inform the lens through which we continue to design social change processes that support the building of more sustainable relationships and community now and into the future.

## Case Study 1: Bolivia – Las Yungas & El Alto, La Paz



**Figure 8: Bolivian family in El Altiplano**

### Context & Project Summary

In traditional communities, the advent of modernization and consumerism and the psychological fall out of colonization have had negative effects on marginalized and indigenous people and their environment. Around the world the story is the same: loss of confidence in traditional and sustainable ways of life; inability to support themselves with subsistence agriculture; issues with land rights; increasing environmental disasters; fragmentation of their communities and displacement; getting into debt for consumer goods and basic needs. The following case studies are pertinent to research into these issues.

My hope in facilitating workshops in Bolivia is to demonstrate that Processwork tools can support the reclaiming and affirming of self-determination, leadership skills, confidence and dignity, in indigenous groups and grassroots communities in the Global South. I also imagined that they might demonstrate that facilitating both the inner and outer awareness and support needed for more sustainable and resilient communities into the future is a key area where Processwork can be particularly effective.

## Country and cultural context

Bolivia is an extremely beautiful country. Nestling amidst the Andes in South America, its capital city, La Paz, sits at 3,800 meters above sea level. Stretching from the majestic icebound peaks of the Cordillera Real and bleak, high altitude deserts of the Andes to the lush rainforests and vast savannahs of the Amazon Basin, Bolivia is a rich resource of biodiversity. The beauty and variety of this landscape is matched by the ethnic and cultural diversity of the country's population, the majority of whom are of indigenous decent. The languages of *Imara* and *Quechua*, amongst others, are still spoken as the first language of most.

Bolivia is one of the world's smallest contributors to climate change and is responsible for 0.04% of global carbon emissions, yet the effects of climate change are already a reality in Bolivia. This has led Bolivia to play an increasingly forceful and prominent role in International climate change negotiations. As in many other parts of the world, it is the communities that are already in situations of poverty and vulnerability that are feeling the effects hardest. Five of the main areas impacted by climate chaos are food security, glacial retreat, water availability, natural disasters, diseases and forest fires.

In 2006, Evo Morales became the first indigenous leader of Bolivia. It was a year of great turmoil and possibility. In his fifth year, Morales and his elected government have introduced many amendments to the current National Constitution, which have huge support from a large majority of the population. These amendments include many additional rights for indigenous women and men which further support the reclaiming and affirming of self-determination, leadership skills, confidence and dignity in indigenous groups and rural communities. Examples of these being: rights to land, sexual and reproductive rights, anti-discrimination and gender equity rights, equal participation and support for ecologically sustainable agriculture.

The right of the Earth to have its own voice and the collective right of all people to clean air, land and water is also a central focus of the amended Constitution.

### Project Description and Background

For four years I have run participative training programmes in Bolivia with my close friend and colleague Ana Rhodes Castro.



**Figure 9: Ana Rhodes Castro with some of the participants' children attending the course and in the gender forum trainings**

I have observed and analysed the results seen and the methods used during these programmes. We have been invited by incredibly dedicated, resilient and underfunded organisations like the Association of Ecological Producers (AOEBE)<sup>154</sup>. This organisation and its members are committed to promoting a more financially and ecologically sustainable future for rural indigenous producers, representing about 30,000 producers who practise ecologically sustainable agriculture, or are moving towards it, and place emphasis on food sovereignty<sup>155</sup>. Our initial invitation to work with AOPEB and later Aldeas SOS Infantiles<sup>156</sup>, came from a colleague I met at Findhorn, Marion Remus who worked with AOPEB at that time. Her vision of seeing more women in leadership, gender equity, skills in the resolution

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<sup>154</sup> (AOPEB, 2014)

<sup>155</sup> In Latin America, the term food sovereignty issued by the people of Via Campesina (<http://www.viacampesina.org/en>) and other peasant organizations, is used rather than the term food security, which is a more institutional concept. Food sovereignty includes the right of peoples to decide where the food comes from, where it is produced, if it is organic, GM-free, etc. Food security simply aims to ensure that there is food available and defends the rights to food. Therefore, food sovereignty can include food security needs.

<sup>156</sup> (Aldeasinfantiles, 2014)

of conflict, and the need for a more deeply democratic culture within the organisation and management structure, infused this project with life.



**Figure 10: Marion Remus & PukaPuka community**

Change in Bolivia is happening rapidly, firstly due to climate change induced flooding, drought and melting glaciers which affect long-term water supply security, and secondly through the consolidation of global corporate hegemony over the international economic system and the resulting impact on local people. The consequently high departure rate of people from the rural areas to the slums on the edges of the capital city, La Paz, is contributing to an increasing lack of access to sufficient food, water and adequate shelter. These circumstances, amplified by health and mental health issues in turn often lead to alcoholism, drug addiction and related domestic violence, which further breaks down families and communities. From a Processwork perspective these addictions and behaviours are seen as symptoms of very difficult situation, where the personal and cultural belief systems and dynamics of rank, power and privilege are experienced as oppressive and substance use, and/or violence are used to tolerate the situation.

*In 1998, the Bolivian Human Development Report raised that, indicators of human development had developed positively in the last 30 years, nevertheless they were much differentiated between regions, social and ethnic groups. Gender inequities were considered very critical, concluding that women have lower levels of human development than men and their education and income levels are below those of the masculine*



*population. These gender inequities are intensified in areas (departments) with lower level of social indicators. This report also accounted for lower socio-economic women's conditions, compared to those of men, at any level of desegregation and at any place of the country. However, differences within each of the groups appeared larger than the differences among the groups, inferring that the inequities of gender were transversal to social inequities.*<sup>157</sup>

UNDP, 2003

The United Nations Development Programme also published the following data. Unfortunately this information is from 2003. However, I considered it worth including as there is very little up to date information available, given the small number of United Nations research projects in the Andean region over the last ten years. Fortunately I have been able to find data that gives some statistical context for this case study.

*Addressing the opportunities of rural women is critical in Bolivia, where 90 percent of the rural population is poor, and welfare indicators identify women as especially vulnerable. For example, 31 percent of girls between 10 and 18 years old do not attend school, and one in three female Bolivians is illiterate. As highlighted in the UN inter-agency report, this will severely impact not only their futures, but also those of their families and communities, ranging from the kind of salary that they will command in the future and their vulnerability to violence, to the health and nutritional levels of their children.*<sup>158</sup>

UN Women, 2012

Most recently, I found the information below on the webpages of a women's organisation that I collaborated with in the hosting of the gender forums in La Paz, and who I believe continued working in some of the rural communities with women's empowerment, leadership and the support of the women's commissions which provided the women in leadership in rural communities to seek legal representation, access funding to travel to

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<sup>157</sup> (United Nations Development Programme, 2003)

<sup>158</sup> (UN Women, 2012)

regional, national and occasionally international gatherings and to attain legal advice and support with setting up small businesses in their local areas.

The core aims of the project are outlined below and my research in this area centred on demonstrating how Processwork can make a valuable contribution towards achieving these goals.

- Support the formation and strengthening of embryonic Women's Organisations, which provide a platform for empowerment, advocacy, solidarity, national and international networking and rights awareness.
- Facilitate gender awareness training of trainers forums for members of the AOPEB, fostering the equity of gender within the organisation, their associate partner organisations and within the family.
- Training and training of trainers in Confidence Building, Self Esteem, Leadership development and group process.
- Diversity and Leadership training for the senior management teams of AOPEB & Aldeas SOS Infantiles.

At the end of all training sessions, these NGOs and various community organisations worked with us to evaluate the training programme and set out guidelines for local NGOs to initiate a follow up programme of grassroots activities to support the livelihoods and sustainability of participants in the long term. Thus, this project can be a "seed" or inspiration for many more activities.<sup>159</sup>

### **Project Activities**

The programme focused on the areas outlined below which had been identified as priority areas by our organisers in Bolivia, and were also linked to the United Nations Millennium Goals. Particularly those referring to Women's participation and access to leadership, human rights, specifically supporting indigenous rights,<sup>160</sup> and poverty reduction. In 2012, Kate Raworth of Oxfam in her report, 'A Safe and Just Space for Humanity: Can we live

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<sup>159</sup> (AOPEB, 1993)

<sup>160</sup> (United Nations, 2014)



within the doughnut?’,<sup>161</sup> points out that we are currently in breach of eight of the eleven social boundaries required for a safe and just world. These include food, water, equity, resilience and having a vote, and in particular, access to food and gender equality. Raworth argues that

*Any vision of sustainable development for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century must recognise that eradicating poverty and achieving social justice must be addressed within the boundaries of our Earth’s ecosystem.*<sup>162</sup>

*Pamela Raworth, 2013*

**Leadership, human rights awareness and confidence building—training of trainers**—This training was designed for those working with rural and marginalized women and men and for these people themselves. The modules included leadership skills and building upon local traditional, inherent wisdom and knowledge as a framework to facilitate increased self-confidence, self-esteem, leadership, awareness of basic human rights, and how to apply these skills in all areas of local and national life.

**Conflict facilitation & Gender Relations—training of trainers**—This training revolved around Conflict facilitation skills and addressing underlying cultural assumptions that may be gender based, and support ongoing harmful or unhelpful practices. The conflict facilitation and communication skills we used were particularly focused on the development of the facilitator, and gender equity.

**Strategic Support and Management skills for organisational development**—This training introduced tools to highlight unhelpful organisational practices and offered additional skills and organisational structures that aimed to support more effective organisations.

## **Bolivian Case Study a)- Las Yungas**

Ana Rhodes (a friend and colleague from Findhorn ecovillage) and I were invited to work with a group of largely indigenous farmers in Caranavi, a small frontier town on the edge of the rainforest in the Las Yungas in Bolivia.

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<sup>161</sup> (Oxfam, 2012)

<sup>162</sup> (Raworth, Pamela, 2013 p1)

### Geographical and cultural context

The farmers were representatives of producer cooperatives and associate members of AOPEB, a network of about 80,000 local agricultural producers, aiming to produce organic, Fairtrade products. Our trainings were included as an ongoing, modular leadership training organised and facilitated by Universidad Nur, a Bahai University based in La Paz, Bolivia in conjunction with APOPEB. We had been told that the group suffered from apathy and a lack of engagement, and that in spite of the leadership trainings that they had been receiving; there had been no noticeable change in the participants' levels of enthusiasm or initiative taking. Our brief was to teach a processwork approach to conflict facilitation, confidence building and leadership.



**Figure 11:** Caranavi, Las Yungas: Conflict Facilitation & Leadership skills training.

### Structural analysis

The initial description of the participants' behaviour described as 'having apathy', and "a lack of engagement" immediately caught my attention. I also sensed in the background a sense of indignation and frustration from the organisers who felt that they were doing all they possibly could *to help* with no real results. While I empathised with the organisers, I also imagined that the participants might feel patronised and told what to do, which if it were the case was unlikely to elicit positive feedback. With awareness of the rank dynamics that must be at play between the largely city dwelling NGO workers with their university education, and the participants who were mostly coffee farmers from fairly remote areas, I could imagine some of the difficulties between the two groups before I had even arrived.

### The Training

On the first day of the training we played games to break the ice, and then worked with inner critics and developing inner resources or *patterns over the edge*<sup>163</sup>, by imagining people we admired that were able to take a stance for what they believed in. Many of them chose Mother Mary, Jesus Christ or other figures from their region like Domitilla Chungara, a labour leader and feminist, who stood for the rights of miners and their families in the face of extremely exploitative practises. In spite of receiving death threats she continued, after her husband died and succeeded in changing some of the worst conditions that had to be endured by the miners and their families at that time.<sup>164</sup> The participants made masks of their inner critics and their allies, and then donning the mask of their ally, imagined that they were looking through their eyes, back at their inner critics, which were often very harsh. From this place they were able to respond to their critics and find new ways of standing up to them. Later they went on to then become their critics and see if there was the essence of a useful quality in that critic which they also needed.

On the second day of the training we introduced and explored the Processwork concept that conflict is not just something that happens outside of ourselves; we are part of the system within which the conflict is happening and consequently affect and are affected by the conflict. We then introduced the dynamics of rank, power and privilege and encouraged the group to find areas of rank that they could celebrate and what areas they found challenging or difficult to recognise or feel good about.

### What is rank?

As described in Chapter three, Mindell defines, rank as ‘the sum of a person’s privileges’. He also says that it is ‘a conscious or unconscious, social or personal ability or power arising from culture, community support, personal psychology and/or spiritual power’<sup>165</sup>. Whether you earned or inherited your rank, it organises much of your communication behaviour. For this reason, awareness of the dynamics of rank, power and privilege can be very insightful and relieving on an individual and group level.

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<sup>163</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

<sup>164</sup> (Barios de Chungara, Domitila, 1978)

<sup>165</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 1995)

At the end of this exercise, one of the participants, Victor, stood up suddenly and began addressing the room in his native language of Imara. His presence and posture had changed dramatically. From being relatively quiet and somewhat deferential in nature, his posture, tone of voice and presence changed completely, unexpectedly commanding the attention of everyone present. It seemed as if it was no longer just Victor speaking and that something greater was pouring through him. There was a tangible sense that he was speaking not only on behalf of himself, his family and community but also for all proud indigenous people of Incan descent. From a Processwork perspective he could be considered to be speaking for the spirit of all peoples who have been marginalized over the centuries, finding his and their voice. To those in the room the power of their presence was palpable.

When Victor stood up we were very touched, and especially when he proceeded to share how he had lost confidence in himself after years of being humiliated for being indigenous. We saw how the 'symptom' of apathy that we had been asked to address in the training was directly related to a lack of confidence because of the voices of humiliation and criticism that he and his people had internalised over the centuries. As Victor became identified with the privilege and strength of his heritage, finding the inspiration and courage to speak out, the atmosphere in the room changed completely. A sense of passion and commitment to taking a stance filled the room. This was exactly the kind of energy that the group needed in order to confront the conflict that they were facing in their local area in which a very large coffee company was pressuring the local communities to sell their land, lose their autonomy and become employees. The community leaders' response up to that point had been mostly to shout at the company representatives and walk out of negotiations, leaving the more vulnerable members of the community to be won over by false promises. As Victor accessed the sense of inherent wisdom, dignity and entitlement within himself and in the group, their right, and ability to stand for autonomy and sustainable livelihood became stronger.

### **Situation Analysis**

In that moment the low self-esteem he often experienced, and had spoken about earlier in the training, derived at least in part from being shamed for his ethnicity, and his parents before him, was counteracted in that moment by the sense of pride in, and connection with, his heritage. This enabled him to go beyond his internalised belief systems, or edges, and

connect with his own or less known sense of pride, dignity and self-worth. From a multidimensional perspective Victor accessed the essence level, which anchored him with qualities that took him beyond the polarities of criticism and reaction to the criticism.

This experience of being shamed or oppressed as a young person was not only Victor's personal experience, but also a collective experience shared with many of the traditional peoples of Bolivia and around the world. At times, working with the outer and consequent inner critics that undermined Victor's confidence in this case, the atmosphere seemed to speak of the past 500 years, since the Spanish invasion of South America and possibly centuries beforehand when centuries of serfdom began. This explicitly shows how when history is left unaddressed it continues to influence the present through the personal and cultural belief systems, historical influences and time spirits. It also shows the holographic nature of this approach, where the inner experience reflects the outer and the outer reflects the inner.



**Figure 12: Time Spirits and the Wipala**

This mural was painted on the wall of the first seminar room that we worked in Caranavi, Las Yungas, Bolivia. The mural depicts a local farmer, *campesino*, being crucified on farming tools in the centre. Surrounded by a group of his people brandishing the Wipala<sup>166</sup>, a symbol of indigenous rights and solidarity. The unexpected presence of this mural and the spirit it

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<sup>166</sup> (Wikipedia, 2014)

depicts felt very synchronistic given the themes we were facilitating with Victor and the other members of the group. It captured the timespirit<sup>167</sup> that was so strongly influencing the atmosphere or field that we were working with.

Victor's ability to identify with the strength of his heritage, and find that within himself, in turn, influenced the atmosphere within the group. As his inner state shifted he acted both as a role model for others in the group, by showing a behaviour pattern much needed by the other members of the group, and on a field level there was a tangible shift in the atmosphere as a previously marginalised experience in the group was occupied. This was relieving not only for Victor, as he ceased to project the power and privilege in the moment onto 'the company' and felt it in himself, but also from a field theory perspective as his words relieved the atmosphere, or field. These roles do not only belong to Victor, but are part of the quantum field, influenced by time spirits and cultural edges, and in this sense are shared experiences, part of what Jung might have called the Collective Unconscious, and what Mindell termed the Global Dreaming Body, or Universal Quantum Field.

Processwork has impact on different levels simultaneously. In training contexts we often begin by working on individual personal development, which often includes awareness of rank, inner critics and becoming aware of limiting belief systems that influence us from moment to moment, then we move to working with the relationship, communication or transactional level, and then finally onto the group level. In this particular case study, although the next topics we covered were communication theory and practice, awareness of double signals in communication and giving and receiving feedback, for the purpose of this case study, I will move into describing the open forum we facilitated, which is a structure that encourages all the voices to be heard.

It is a method of working with groups that facilitates conflict or difficulty as it arises in the atmosphere or 'field'.

**An atmosphere or 'field'** includes not only the individuals concerned but also the entire organisation or culture of which the group is a part. It consists of the more familiar or overt

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<sup>167</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

aspects of group life like agenda items, identified roles and rational discussion as well as the less obvious and more difficult aspects of any group. Examples of the latter include the minority views, shadows or 'elephants in the room', cultural influences that reflect the belief systems and time spirits as well as 'ghosts' which are the points of view or opinions that are not identified with or easily expressed in the group and yet strongly influence the field. Often when these 'ghosts' are voiced and interacted with, there is a sense of relief and resolution. Addressing the content and structure of concerns is important in groups. However, if the underlying issues or feelings in the background are not addressed it is unlikely that a deeply felt resolution will be reached.

### **Facilitation of a Group Process**

We facilitated the group process by inviting people to take positions or 'roles' that represented the various points of view. After airing many opinions and feelings, the group began to express some of the despair and anger that they felt; however, as we worked with these roles, encouraging people to inhabit different sides of the dialogue and to experience 'the other side', the atmosphere began to change. As we addressed not only the overt issues, but also some of the underlying views and issues.

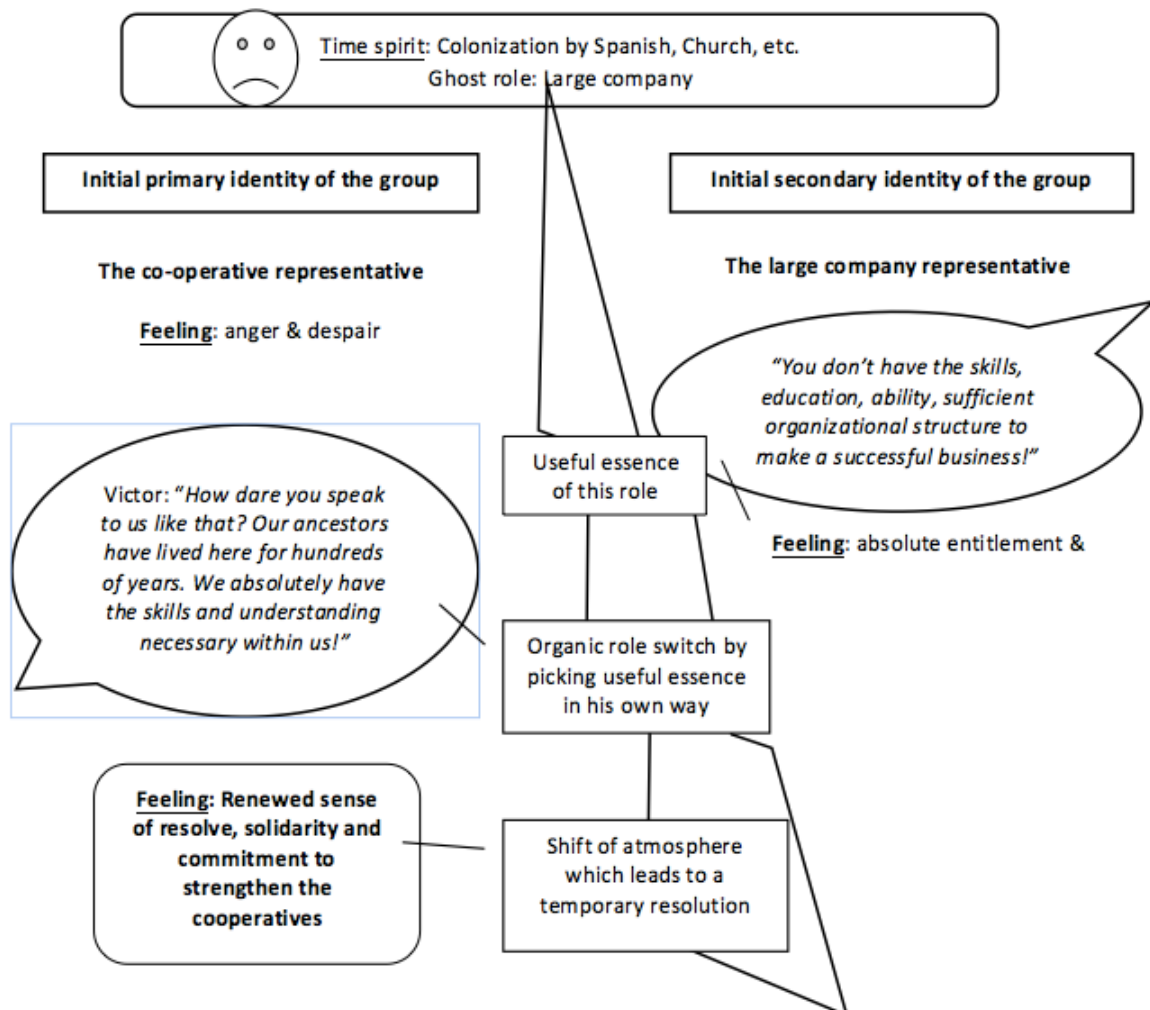
### **Situational Analysis**

One of the participants was *dreamt up*<sup>168</sup>, to inhabit *the ghost*, or unoccupied role, of the large company that possesses absolute entitlement and clarity. As he spoke congruently with this energy we encouraged the group to see if they ever felt like that, completely one sided, convinced of their opinion and unwilling to listen to anyone else. Everyone could identify with being like that at times in their lives, and with that realisation there ceased to be an 'other', as at least temporarily that other was also within self, and the tension in the atmosphere shifted. We then facilitated an inner work with the participants in which they each connected with a place or situation where the essence of this one sidedness could be useful for them, and in particular in relationship to this specific situation. Many found that at the heart of the experience of 'absolute entitlement and clarity' was a sense of

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<sup>168</sup> To become temporarily identified with an unfamiliar or unoccupied voice or role in the field.

resoluteness and sense of commitment, which they would need if they were to run their own coffee cooperative.



**Figure 13: Background Roles Analysis**

This demonstrates how cultivating an ability to pick up an aspect of the 'other side' is a key tool in Processwork, and that in conflicted situations how often the essence of this same quality can provide the exact *meta-skill*, or feeling attitude that is needed to address the difficult situation. This is similar to homeopathy or vaccination, in that a miniscule amount of the apparent difficulty is what we need to address the situation.

A renewed sense of resolve, solidarity and commitment to strengthen the cooperatives and to look for solutions that would enable them to become more effective in all areas of coffee production began to emerge. Rather than just focusing on fighting the company, they could



then use that energy to build alliances, improve the internal practices of their own organisations and find ways to be more inclusive of other producers.

We ended the training with a decision making process that facilitated the group to come up with clear next steps which they could take in order to really ground their intention and to strengthen themselves as cooperatives.

### **Synchronicity and the World Channel**

The president of the coffee cooperatives arrived unexpectedly to hear the outcomes of the workshop and he was so impressed by the next steps that had emerged from the Open Forum that he offered his support in taking the dialogue to the next level needed within local government. This was what was needed for the participants to progress this decision and felt like a real blessing and a great way to end our four days together. This seemed like another very strong synchronistic event. The president could not have known about the process that we had just facilitated, and yet arrived at exactly the right time to support their next steps on a consensus reality level. This is a causal phenomena and shows the non-local nature of the field and its interconnections.

### **Situational Analysis**

As a Process-orientated facilitator and consultant, it is already possible to begin to map a roles analysis structural diagnosis of what some of the 'issues' might be in this situation.

### **Conclusion**

I highlight below several perspectives that the lens of Processwork brings into focus in this case study. Processwork's multidimensional framework and philosophy of deep democracy enables us to track our perception, or lenses through which we perceive, and brings into awareness the worldviews, values and perceived needs, which inform all of our interactions and relationships. It also offers us tools that can facilitate the inner and outer diversity that we inevitably experience as part of a complex system and affects how we design.

As Daniel Wahl wrote in his paper *Design and How it Matters*

*Design can most broadly be defined as intentionality expressed through interactions and relationships. Our worldview and value systems shape*

*the way we relate to each other and the rest of the community of life. Out of these relationships arise a series of needs, which shape our intentions – the way we aim to meet these needs. These intentions and the worldview or value system that underlies them define how, why and what we choose to design.*<sup>169</sup>

*Daniel Whal, 2014*

The intention of a Processwork design in training is to introduce a deep democracy perspective. This implies a multi-dimensional perspective with the universal meta-skill of eldership at its heart.

Many, if not all, of the trainings previously offered within the context I was working had been primarily focused on the structural level of change, on the tangible more quantifiable level. However, the more subjective experiences of internalised oppression, the influence of time spirits, awareness of rank dynamics, social, but psychological, contextual and spiritual, had not been addressed. The apparent apathy described by our organisers as the presenting problem, was in fact not apathy at all, but a presenting resignation to being criticised by the organisers for not making better use of the resources being made available to them in the various training programmes provided. This is an example of a double signal. They appeared to be apathetic, but in the background there was an atmosphere of hostility or something hard. Because of the rank dynamics it would have been difficult for them to directly criticise or complain that they felt patronised, so it came out as apathy or even sullenness initially. However, what our organisers, not trained to read the signals that underpin the presenting communication style, had not realised was that the participants needed internal as well as external support to access new patterns of behaviour or in Processwork terminology ‘patterns over the edge’.

Quantitative analysis had been used primarily to evaluate the success or failure of small parts of the leadership training programmes, but not to engage with the underlying issues, nor to redesign the programme to address those issues.

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<sup>169</sup> (Wahl, Gaia Education, 2014)

Based on this experience I would suggest that in the design of the on-going cooperative support, both the inner and outer levels be included. To clarify it seemed that there was a chronic lack of confidence in some areas. It is important to design experiential training programmes, which support the participants to have an embodied experience of a *pattern over the edge*, to directly experience the change and to design an environment where personal and group changes can happen that contribute to social change.

Spaces to practise new styles of relationship behaviours are needed. For long-term sustainable outcomes, a worldview that includes the understanding of the importance of supporting the individuation and personal development of the farmers is necessary. To run a sustainable cooperative, a design process based on a whole systems approach that includes the wellbeing of the inner and outer is essential.

### **Leadership, human rights awareness and confidence building**

Most of our work with the coffee farmers in the training was overtly focused on ‘personal and professional development’, working with inner critics based on their personal and cultural edges, with the inner and outer rank dynamics in the field, communication and feedback skills and group process focussed on resolving the possible ‘forced’, sale of all their raw coffee beans to a multi-national conglomerate for low returns and almost certainly increasingly poor conditions of exchange. One positive tangible CR outcome or next step that emerged from this experience was that the group reached collective clarity that most of them wanted to continue to strengthen their own producer cooperatives and not sell out to the multi nationals. This renewed enthusiasm, solidarity and confidence galvanised a sense of resolve, which impressed the president of the coffee producers association and moved him to support them with this direction.

This demonstrates an important contribution of Processwork by showing that the background understanding of the power of system self-organisation<sup>170</sup> informs our experience and that encouraging the expression of diversity, and the expression of all the voices in the field will ultimately lead to a more resilient, long term sustainable solution,

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<sup>170</sup> See Chapter Three—Donella Meadows.

than consciously or unconsciously marginalising all that does not adhere to the dominant leadership framework whatever that may be.

The unexpected arrival of the President of the coffee producers at the end of the training, just in time to hear this passionate and enthusiastic pledge of solidarity and commitment from his workers and his consequent pledge to arrange the meeting with the local government officials that was needed to progress the worker owned cooperatives proposal to continue to manage and run their own affairs, could be seen a pure chance, or it could be seen as an example of a meaningful coincidence or synchronicity<sup>171</sup>. While it would be difficult to prove that the experiences the participants had had in the previous days where they worked on their issues of low self-esteem, inner critics and identities of low rank, and reconnected with their inherent worth and innate strength and wisdom influenced the arrival of the President just in that moment, or his following decision, his arrival did none the less feel meaningful, like an affirmation of the work that we had just done together. He seemed to pick up on the energised and empowered atmosphere in the room and was moved to act as an ally to the farmers in that moment and to use his social rank to facilitate the conversation they needed to have to retain control of their own areas of production.

*Synchronicity is a meaningful coincidence of inner and outer.*<sup>172</sup>

*C.G. Jung*

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<sup>171</sup>Synchronicity is a non-consensus experience wherein the observer feels that two events unrelated in consensus reality are related to one another in a non-consensus reality manner through meaning. The events give the observer the experience that there is a unity, that is, a “one world”, implied by the interconnections (Mindell, Arnold 2000, p352).

<sup>172</sup> (Jung, Carl Gustav, 1963 p845)

*Jung concluded that synchronicities and coincidences occurred at a higher than expected rate only as long as he was excited about the work! When his excitement dissipated, the coincidences diminished. Although meaning cannot be measured in objective, consensual terms, this does not mean that coincidences do not exist. .... By definition, synchronicity simply has no provable significance. The observation of a synchronistic occurrence depends on the observer's viewpoints and their frameworks. In other words, two events may appear to be meaningfully connected as far as you are concerned, yet these events may be irrelevant to me.*

*Arnold Mindell, 2000*

### **Situational Analysis**

From the perspective of field theory the atmosphere or field that we live in could be thought of as being like an electromagnetic field. Mindell describes this in *Quantum Mind* by inviting us to imagine putting iron filings on a piece of paper and putting a magnet underneath it. The filings organise themselves into oval forms around the magnetic poles created by the magnet. Mindell uses this example as a metaphor for group life. In the example above the coffee farmers and the colonising transnational companies or Spanish conquerors are polarities in the field seen in the mural in Figure 3. From a multidimensional perspective on the consensus reality level the roles are occupied by the everyday identity of the farmers and the transnational employee. However, on the dreaming level those identities are no longer fixed. All of us have mixed blood or psychological diversity within us and elements of both polarities can be found within all the roles. We tend to marginalise certain parts and project them onto the other. In this case the farmers projected clarity and absolute entitlement onto the transnational employee, and in turn an unstructured, relaxed and dreamy approach was projected onto the farmers.

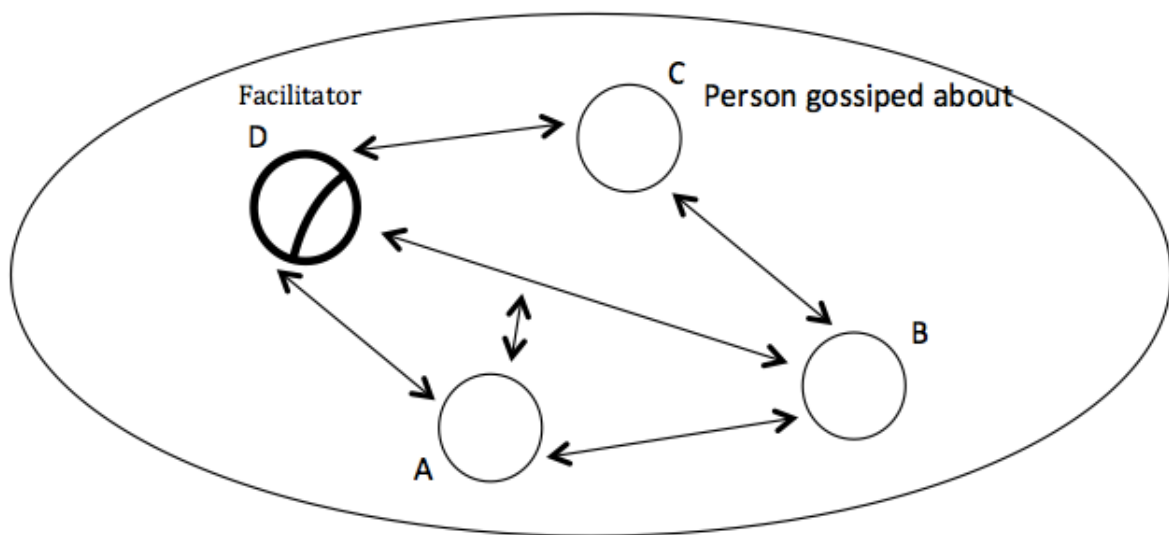
From a field or systems thinking perspective both roles, the inner diversity of the participants, the time spirit portrayed in the mural and the non-local role of the president who appeared unexpectedly are part of the field, all therefore in some way form part of the system's diversity and are needed for its on-going evolution or growth.

When working with groups the role of the facilitator herself is important and is also part of the field. This role has the ability to oversee what is happening and without this awareness the group process can easily get stuck in reacting or recycling issues. The facilitator can bring

awareness to the situation by framing what she sees and senses, pointing out and staying with hot spots<sup>173</sup>, facilitating issues that become momentarily personal between the participants, naming the ghost or unoccupied roles that she perceives in the atmosphere, and even framing her own subjective experience as part of the field as possible information that could be relevant for the group to become more aware of itself. Mindell says that we are all more complex than just the one role that we happen to be identified with in that moment. He goes on to say:

*You are more complex than any role, including the role of yourself! Your most honest identity, if you have one, would be that you are all the roles and the interactional processes between them.*<sup>174</sup>

Arnold Mindell, 2000



**Figure 14: You as a field: you have four or more roles within you, including who you used to be and who I used to be, and the interactions between all the roles.**

*The most stunning thing living systems and some social systems can do is to change themselves utterly by creating whole new structures and behaviours. In biological systems that power is called evolution. In human*

<sup>173</sup> (See Glossary of Terms) (Somé, Malidome Patrice, 1993)

<sup>174</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2000 p551)

*economies it's called technical advance or social revolution. In systems lingo it's called self-organisation.*<sup>175</sup>

*Donella Meadows, 2008*

In mythology fields had a task. For example, Malidoma Some<sup>176</sup> from Burkino Faso in his writing about the Dagara people cites an example of this when he describes that traditionally when a child is born the village elders gather round the mother and tune into the spirit of the child and what purpose they have come into being with. On this basis the child is given a name. Malidoma himself was given his name by his community elders before he was born. His name meant *bridging the worlds*. Little did he, or they, know then that at twelve years old Jesuit priests would forcibly remove him from the village to 'be educated', that he would then return when he was twenty one and reconnect with the traditional rites of passage that he had missed during his years with the Jesuits and would subsequently settle in the USA and travel internationally teaching the importance of ritual in primarily westernised societies where this wisdom has been lost.

This example points to a time when people, their relationships, nature and the deeper dreaming processes were still seen as interconnected and as forming the purpose or task of each individual, relationship, group and community. Processwork shares this idea from its process orientated, multidimensional perspective and assumes that each of us in some way is called into being, and have a central myth, quantum wave or calling which informs the choices we make in life if we do not marginalise those tendencies. One way to know that we are connected with this deeper dreaming process is to notice if we feel 'on track' in our lives, or in a group setting, if we feel aligned with the purpose and atmosphere of the group. From the viewpoint of the deeper dreaming it is not the relationships, nor our individual psychological processes which are the most important, but the underlying 'purpose' or song which the group is trying to manifest through us. Perhaps in the case study above, the song or process trying to manifest is the interaction of the different roles portrayed in the mural in order to bring awareness to the interaction between these roles and change the historical

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<sup>175</sup> (Meadows, Donella, 2008, p 159)

<sup>176</sup> (Somé, Malidome Patrice, 1994)

imprints that have been oppressive for so long, not just through invariant role switching where the power is held by the previously marginalised, but where there is an integration of elements of all parts and new emergent properties arise from the system, which then will be more resilient and sustainable in the long term, and not just keep cycling back into polarisation.

*Community awakening depends on rank awareness- the sense of difference—and shuffling ability—the sense that we are everything. Consciousness depends on being aware of and standing for your rank, noticing how it marginalizes the issues of those with lower social status. Consciousness also depends on knowing you are the other.....If you get stuck in the spiritual...equality for all beings, you are likely to marginalise real, social issues. Similarly, if you fight only for rank consciousness, you easily marginalise spirituality and love.*

*History will change when you and I have awareness of diversity and sameness, when social change is accompanied by recognition of rank imbalance and NCR equality....My closest friends and worst enemies have been great teachers.*<sup>177</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, A 2000*

### **Awareness of the dynamics of Rank, Power and Privilege**

Rank is a concept embedded in the Processwork approach and exploring it in this case study has shown how leadership and other organizational skills can be developed from a more empowering and conscious place within people when taking rank into account. This example demonstrates how valuable the understanding of the dynamics of rank, power and privilege can be for any individual, group, organisation and the world. When we become aware of the more marginalised parts of ourselves, stop projecting them onto others, and find ways to step out of our old, or known identities, and into those lesser known, or more secondary parts of ourselves, developing awareness of our feelings and letting our body sensations guide us, our experience of the world, and how we interact with it can change dramatically, as illustrated in the case of Victor.

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<sup>177</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2000, p556)



When rank is used without awareness it can lead to abuse, which can happen both when the hierarchical structure of a group or organisation is clear and in groups that identify with equality, where often there are hidden power structures that lead to conflict. Lack of awareness of rank can be seen in this example in the big coffee company who exerts its influence on the local communities without any regard for the real well being of the producers. A responsible use of rank in this instance would perhaps have been to facilitate a dialogue with the producers to see what they really wanted, or to see if it were possible to collaborate. An example of psychological and spiritual rank was when Victor spoke strongly and clearly in his own language, and then, having crossed his own edge, stepped in to lead and facilitates the rest of this group in consolidating their vision for running their own cooperative organizations.

### **Another Conclusion**

The example of Victor above highlights the need to design programmes with a focus on empowerment, defined from a deep democracy perspective as inner and outer freedom that is not unconsciously constrained by inner and outer critics. Awareness of the dynamics of rank, power and privilege on the different levels are particularly helpful. In the majority of international cooperation programmes, affirming the spiritual rank, or deeply felt inherent connection to the land and nature for example, seems less common. However, when Victor stood and connected deeply with the pride and knowledge of his ancestors his entire quality of being changed from deferential, quiet and introspective to strong, outward looking, clear and definitive. To facilitate deep processes of social change I suggest that the design of these programmes must support the connection to and expression of these inherent strengths which one could call Spiritual and local rank. He was also experiencing an embodied or felt sense experience of a pattern over the edge, or way of being that he was not so consciously identified with, particularly in this more public arena. This previously more marginalised style becomes occupied and accessible, rather than being expressed through double signals, unconsciously and in a potentially hurtful manner.

### **Bolivian Case Study b) - El Alto, La Paz**

After the insights gained in Las Yungas from working with the coffee farmers in Caranavi I was invited to go and work in El Alto, La Paz.

### Geographical and cultural context

El Alto is a large very poorly built area of La Paz where about 750,000 people live, most of whom have moved there over the last 20 years with the hope that it would enable them to engage with the money economy and improve their lifestyles. Unfortunately, the housing conditions are extremely poor. Often, you can find a family of six or seven living in one room with concrete walls, no heating inside and they often only have one change of clothes and in the winter have to keep those clothes on all the time. The temperature can drop to minus 3—4 degrees Celsius and minus 10 C. at times. It's very cold and in some areas there is no sewage system and no running water. As a result, there are open sewers and people have to walk to carry their water. There are also huge gas shortages due to the corrupt and illegal sales of natural gas. There are actually large amounts of natural gas reserves in Bolivia but this has been mostly exported legally or illegally to the neighbouring countries like Chile, Peru and Argentina, meaning that many of the local people don't have enough gas even for their cooking needs<sup>178</sup>. This results in a very tough and trying set of circumstances.

Sadly, in such a difficult situation there is also frequently occurring domestic violence, depression, and gender inequality<sup>179</sup>. Many of the women experience domestic violence on a regular basis, or are depressed, and alcoholism in men is a severe associated problem<sup>180</sup>. It is also very common for a man to have more than one family, so even in those very poor situations a man might have two separate families, which he is minimally supporting at an extremely basic level and so the women really suffer.<sup>181</sup>

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<sup>178</sup> Gas is a conflicting issue in Bolivia. In 2006, Evo Morales signed a decree placing his country's energy industry under state control (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/americas/4963348.stm> retrieved 27.08.13), that is still running. In rural areas, a number of Bolivians still depend on more traditional biomass-based fuels for heat and cooking (<http://www.lse.ac.uk/IDEAS/publications/reports/pdf/SU005/kaup.pdf> retrieved 27.08.13)

<sup>179</sup> Data of this situation has been described at the beginning of Bolivian case studies.

<sup>180</sup> The annual consumption of alcoholic beverages in Bolivia is equal to 8.3 litres per head, almost 50% above the average for Latin America (5.7 litres), which leads, in turn, high levels of domestic violence the country, the government said. In the period 2007-2011 occurred in Bolivia 247 369 complaints of violence against women, of which only 51 cases have resulted in a sentence, according to private statistics and Development Information Center of Women (ICW). <http://www.notitarde.com/Salud/Alto-consumo-de-alcohol-en-Bolivia- causa-violencia-domestica/2013/06/11/197024>, retrieved 27.08.13. Other data of alcoholism in Bolivia according to WHO can be checked in this link

[http://www.who.int/substance\\_abuse/publications/global\\_alcohol\\_report/profiles/bol.pdf](http://www.who.int/substance_abuse/publications/global_alcohol_report/profiles/bol.pdf)

<sup>181</sup> (Womankind, 2014)

## Project description and background



**Figure 15: Women's Leadership training**

I was invited to go and work with a women's group in El Alto by a student from a longer term women in leadership program that we had been running for the past two years in Bolivia. Her specific request was to work directly with the internalized criticism that she felt her groups were suffering from.

I was initially hesitant to introduce this work as I felt it might be too challenging for this group, who apparently had never done work like this before. However—my organizer was insistent, and so I reflected on my reticence and noticed that internally I had unconsciously formed an opinion that these women would not be capable of this kind of work as essentially I was only seeing their weakness, and was unconsciously siding with one part of the field, which did not believe in them. I was taken aback to realise that I had unconsciously become part of the system that marginalises these women because they haven't been educated in a particular way, because they wear particular clothes or live in certain circumstances. From a Processwork perspective I was also *dreamed up*<sup>182</sup> to side with the mainstream perspective, which was exactly the inner criticism and judgment that was paralyzing the participants from believing in themselves and taking action to change their

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<sup>182</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

situation. Fortunately my organizer was so adamant, that I decided to trust her judgement, rather than erring on the side of caution. Although I also had some ethical concerns, not wanting to open up a deep process that I would not then be able to facilitate over time, I decided to go with the very positive feedback from my organiser who had also been a student of mine for two years and knew this group and the workshop material well. She would also be available for follow up if needed which allayed my concerns.

## The Training

*For us, the first task doesn't consist in fighting against our companions, but with them changing the system in which we live for another, where men and women have the right to life, work and organization.*<sup>183</sup>

*Domitila Chungara, 2013*

We worked on developing some inner resources, or identifying patterns over the edge of their everyday identity, encouraging them to think about who would be a role model of *eldership*<sup>184</sup> for them in their ability to actually stand up to inner or outer challenges. There were many examples including archetypal figures such as Jesus, Mother Mary, Domitila Chungara, or just simply people that they admire in their own lives. They role played or embodied these qualities and felt deeply into the quality of these people that they admired, noticing if they could feel these within themselves, as a shift in body posture, breathing pattern, style of movement, facial expression etc. Then they drew a face, almost like a mask representing somehow the qualities of the people that they admired as a way to further *anchor*<sup>185</sup> these qualities.

They then spoke with each other about the voices of inner critics, the voices of inner criticism, internalized oppression that they experience and now drew these, making a face of an inner critic giving it a name. They then had the two figures or masks representing these two internal experiences, the *ally*<sup>186</sup> and the inner critic dialogue to see how the ally

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<sup>183</sup> (Wikipedia: Domitila Chúnara , 2013)

<sup>184</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

<sup>185</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

<sup>186</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

would respond to the critic. Often the ally would respond in a very different way to the everyday part of themselves.

### **Situational Analysis**

The ally represents a behaviour further away from the participants' everyday identity. Often what stops us in the process of social change, whether this is on an individual, personal, or on a more collective or organisation level is a lack of patterns of behaviour that we can imagine '*over the edge*'. Externalizing this inner dynamic allowed them to start to see possible change more clearly. *Over the edge* refers to patterns of behaviour that we do not identify with, or imagine are possible for us. The unconscious internalized belief systems, personal and cultural, at the edge of our awareness that influence the way we perceive ourselves and what is possible, largely govern our responses in any given situation, unless awareness is brought to this. Often what also can stop the process of change is the inability to imagine what a different reality could look like. Thinking of someone else who can act differently initially brings to mind some of the qualities that we would need to make the changes we dream of. For example; 50 years ago Martin Luther King's famous speech, '*I have a dream*'<sup>187</sup>, captured the imagination of hundreds of thousands of people and paved the way to the change to the apartheid laws and civil rights in the USA. He created a picture, not a business plan, about why it made sense. Once people could imagine this possibility, it became possible. Now 50 years later there is a black president of the USA. Social change is possible.

In the training, taking a moment to role play, or *shapeshift* into this figure, can give us a felt sense of what it would be like to inhabit more of these qualities. Often the participants will notice that their posture changes, even their breathing patterns, the contact between their feet and the floor, how they feel emotionally, their gaze. We often encourage the participants to find a gesture or movement to anchor this experience so that they can re-access this in the future. This can be a first step in shifting perspective by creating a little distance from internal experience, introducing the role of observer.

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<sup>187</sup> (BBC World News, 1963)

This is an example of a Processwork intervention in the dreaming, or subjective dimension of experience. However when the participant is able to deeply feel into the qualities of the ally, and feel its qualities within themselves going beyond a role play and tapping into the non-local universal or archetypal qualities embodied in their imagination by the person they thought of initially, this can take them to a much deeper experience, where there is no longer 'an other', but they begin to experience as a felt sense, or resonant level, these qualities within themselves. This for some can be an aha! moment, and a realisation that change is possible.

### **The disturbance as a resource**

We then followed this dynamic with a role play where both figures were enacted by the participants, giving them a felt sense of what it would be like to address directly their critics, inner and outer. They then went on to stand in the roles of their critics and find the essence of something useful in them. Often the critic has a lot of power and finding the 1% that is useful in the energy of the critic can often be helpful in finding the *meta-skill* or feeling attitude that is needed to address the inner or outer situation. This is something similar to taking a homeopathic dose of whatever is making us ill. This experience gave the women a physical felt sense of power or strength and many of them gave very positive feedback about the experience. They appreciated having the opportunity to 'take the other side'. Many of them were so used to feeling victimized by their experiences, that they had not realised how strong they were just to endure these ongoing situations of hardship. Harnessing some of this energy and using it to take a stance, even if only against their own inner critics, (many of which reminded them of external figures in their lives, past and present), was profoundly relieving. Many of them were laughing and gossiping with each other after the exercise was over, even though for many it had been very challenging to do.

To complete this process we invited the participants to think of where in their lives these qualities could be useful and to begin to look at what external resources were available to support them in these steps. i.e. in some cases the women were experiencing domestic violence and danger in the home, often linked to alcohol or drug use by their spouses.

The organisers introduced support networks and resources available in El Alto and La Paz, such as *La Coordinadora de la Mujer*<sup>188</sup>, an inspiring women's organisation, founded 25 years ago, with the explicit purpose of promoting, supporting and encouraging women's rights, gender equity and providing support with situations of domestic violence. In 2012, Kate Raworth of Oxfam in her report, 'A Safe and Just Space for Humanity: Can we live within the doughnut?',<sup>189</sup> points out that we are currently in breach of eight of the eleven social boundaries required for a safe and just world. These include food, water, equity, resilience and having a vote, and in particular, access to food and gender equality. Raworth argues that "any vision of sustainable development for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century must recognise that eradicating poverty and achieving social justice must be addressed within the boundaries of our Earth's ecosystem."<sup>190</sup> Many of these women lacked access to many of these basic social boundaries.

### Gender Forums

Some of the participants from El Alto then went on to attend a series of Gender Forums that Ana and I ran over the following 2 years. These were designed to bring men and women together to work on the gender relations, the dynamics of rank and power in the relationships between the men and women, and to look at any possible changes that they would be willing to introduce that would bring increased gender equity into the organisational structures of the producer cooperatives that they were part of. We worked with the men and women together in some sessions and separately in some sessions. One of the most poignant was where the men and women separately had to create short role plays, which they then enacted to a mixed audience. The role plays had two scenes. The first scene depicted our current reality as women/men at home or in the workplace. The second scene depicted their ideal scenario at home or in the workplace. Another exercise involved creating collages in separate men's and women's groups where one collage represented how women experience women, and how women experience men, and vice versa in both positive and negative lights. They then went on to discuss in mixed groups what changes

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<sup>188</sup> (Coordinadora de la Mujer, 2014)

<sup>189</sup> (Oxfam, 2012)

<sup>190</sup> (Raworth, Pamela, 2013)

they would like to see in social and organisational contexts. We then facilitated some open forum discussions where the diversity of perspectives in small groups could be expressed and where some agreements for change in their personal and organisational structures were discussed. In the discussions it was clear that there was diversity of perspective on women's and men's 'sides'. In this case study I have described the majority perspective, none the less there were at least one or two women in each group who already experienced themselves as more empowered already challenging the status quo, and in the gender forum there were also one or two men who were very supportive of the proposed social change processes.

For the purpose of this research I have chosen to focus on marginalised women. However it is clear, that within the men's group there was also a diversity of experience, and the cause of the alcoholic and abusive behaviour, and the attachment to the positions of power with the family and within the producer cooperatives, is also a symptom of feeling marginalised in society as a whole in many cases simply because of their ethnicity, surname, level of education, etc. This is illustrated more in depth in the case of Victor.(Case Study Las Yungas).



**Figure 16: Photographs from some of the work we did supporting the establishment of the women's commission**



## Conclusion

In this study, Processwork contributed to these women's experience of empowerment letting the inner sense of power emerge in the forms of qualities and characters that are culturally close to these indigenous communities, thereby beginning to create *patterns over the edge*<sup>191</sup>. *From a field perspective* Processwork also contributes to creating new patterns for what is socially valued or accepted. Since we began this work in Bolivia the constitution has been amended and women's rights are much more centrally represented which is a very positive change on a CR level.

For the purpose of this research, Marion Remus answered a few questions about the effects of these trainings years after, and sent a report (2008) of AOBEB and DED-Marion's organization- about their women leadership trainings and action in Bolivia. Within this report, these Processwork workshops and gender forums are mentioned, and are seen as a remarkable contribution to changes in women's situations. In a questionnaire that Marion filled in after our work together, when asked about what she most valued about the work we had been doing with the women she replied:

*Especially all the building up of deep group confidence in the gender workshops. It was amazing to observe, how the very shy campesinas opened up. I am convinced that they got a huge impact through the seminars and grew in self-confidence.*<sup>192</sup>

Marion Remus

It is difficult to see cause-effect relations in complex social processes like social change and it is not only Processwork trainings that made possible these social changes that the report describes. However, certainly Processwork can contribute as method to facilitate individual and social changes simultaneously.

All this shows a shift in the time-spirit and reflects the work of many committed and courageous women and men in Bolivia, in government, in indigenous women's networks,

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<sup>191</sup> (Ibid.)

<sup>192</sup> Remus, Marion (Organiser of training programmes in Bolivia response to questionnaire)

and in women's networks around the world. Nevertheless *old patterns die hard* and domestic violence and discrimination against women continues to be prevalent.

Consequently, even though the law has changed, we can see that continuing work with the internalised oppression, or inner critics that these women experience is important. Access to higher self-esteem and levels of confidence are conditions essential to empowerment and taking a stance on one's own behalf. This demonstrates the importance of a deep democracy approach, which equally values the importance of interventions, which impact measurable Consensus Reality changes, such as a change in legislation along with the more subjective inner work which influences our belief systems about what is possible.



Figure 18: Gender Collages



Figure 17: Role Playing in Gender Forum

## Case Study 2: Zaragoza, Aragón, Spain



**Figure 19: Pilar Cathedral on the banks of the River Ebro, Zaragoza**

### Context

Zaragoza is the capital city of the autonomous community of Aragón, Spain. It is almost exactly half way by high speed train between Madrid and Barcelona, about 2 hours' drive from the some of the most beautiful peaks in the Pyrenees Mountain Range which runs along the border between Spain and France. The city is famous for its beautiful architecture such as the Basilica del Pilar, a beautiful cathedral at its heart and is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Some of the older churches strongly resemble Arabic mosques, There was an Arabic population in Aragon in the Centuries IX, X and XI. Their main legacy is the Mudejar architecture. Arab philosopher Averroes at that time advocated the equality of men and women and their great legacy was the Arabic translation of the Greek classics, then translated into Castilian in the School of Translators of Toledo by Alfonso X the Wise and then to the rest of Europe. It is culturally diverse due to migration of peoples of African and Arabic descent in the last twenty years, and there is a large population of Roma people, or Gypsies in Zaragoza and Aragón. Given permission to live there by King Alfonso of Aragón in

1425, they currently are one of the most marginalised groups in the region, with most children only completing primary education.

At a Processwork workshop that I was running in an ecovillage, called Lakabe, about 5 hours from Zaragoza, I met my subsequent course organiser and several of her colleagues who were all lawyers in the college of law at the time. They were very taken with Mindell's work, and in that workshop they worked together as a group to do an exercise, which connected them with their deeper collective professional longing. From this exercise together, the group of five lawyers became clear that setting up parallel to the judicial system in the form a mediation service was what was needed and what they were called to do. I was delighted that they had connected to such a clear shared vision.

However, I was very surprised when they contacted me nine months later to say that although they had been studying mediation skills since we last met, they still did not feel equipped for working with the emotions that arise within the mediation setting, neither their own emotions nor the emotions of their clients. This concern and feeling of lack of skills had stopped them from starting to work in the field of mediation. They said that they had realised that studying more Processwork skills was necessary to be able to really begin to mediate. They felt this body of work would give them the skills that they needed. Below I share with you the outline of the course itself and the experience of working with this group of lawyers and 34 of their colleagues over the subsequent two years.

## **The training**

From 2010-2012, in collaboration with a Processwork colleague, I ran an eight-module training programme for Lawyers in the Zaragoza Bar Association. In this case study, I present my personal observations and analysis of the group dynamics and personal development process of participants using a Processwork framework. I also gathered detailed feedback from a qualitative questionnaire that participants answered at the end of the eight modules.

I have also collected information about further developments after the training by sending them a set of questions about the tangible effects of the training in their professional practices.

## Background

This case study is centred on the introduction of a Processwork approach into a Spanish *Colegio de Abogados* (Bar Association), whose members are keen to set up mediation and restorative justice practices in parallel to the work that they also do as lawyers. This impulse was largely inspired by the fact that the mediation trainings that they had attended in the past had not taught them any skills to deal with emotions in the mediation sessions, neither their own, nor those of their clients. Previous trainings had also failed to teach them how to make use of their own internal reactions and responses within those sessions, many of which given the nature of their work would naturally be challenging to deal with.

## Course Design/ Curriculum

The two-year training programme in Leadership and Conflict facilitation that I and my colleague, Ana Rhodes (also trained in Processwork), ran between 2010-2012, aimed to give the 30 lawyers who attended the programme additional expertise that would support them to develop some of the skills needed to engage in these situations in a different way.

## The Presenting Issue

The initial presenting issue that was described was the overloading of the legal system's capacity to process all the domestic violence claims, causing very high workloads for the judges in the system and leading to the necessity for very rapid decision making. According to our clients, one example of the main problem from their perspective was that, many women from Latin America came to Spain to marry Spanish men, and then tried to divorce them, some under false pretences, to gain financially from the separation. Partially, these false pretences were accusations of domestic violence and abusive behaviour. While there may have been some false cases—according to the statistics below it is likely that many of the cases had authentic concerns.<sup>193</sup>

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<sup>193</sup> (Elperiodicodearagon, 2011): (The following is translated from Spanish):Breaks in marriages where both spouses have Spanish nationality totaled 85 percent while foreign nationals were 5.5 percent of cases and intermarriage totaled 9.5 percent of the ruptures. The latter two groups had an increase in cases of rupture of 0.6 percent in both cases compared to last year.

### **Additional Context**

During a lunchtime meeting we had the opportunity to discuss some of the challenges facing the judges in Aragon and beyond. Speaking personally one of the senior officials in the group shared that up to a third of the judges are affected by work related stress leading to absence from work. A large percentage of these judges also suffer from a crisis of meaning in their work and say they derive none, or little satisfaction from their jobs, and are generally stressed by the number of cases that they have to deal with on an ongoing basis.

According to a recent survey of 2,900 lawyers, the internal barometer of opinion of Spanish Law 2013 annual study commissioned by the General Council of Spanish Lawyers, the following data drawn from this report illustrates the situation of justice as follows. Seventy four per cent of lawyers defined as poor or very poor how the Justice currently works in Spain. However, seventy seven per cent believe that this is due not to the people who work within the system, but to the way it is organized. Eighty eight per cent are of the opinion that potential alternative means of dispute resolution are still not properly established and enhanced. This indeed relates to the fact that, as noted an overwhelming ninety two per cent think that the governments show more interest in trying to control the Justice system it than undertake a thorough reform of the system to fully modernise it and make it efficient. This information provided some understanding as to why the legal system seemed to be working so inefficiently when we started working with this group.

The training ran from 2010—2012, and in 2011 for the first time in Aragón a law was passed to make mediation a legal alternative to the judicial system.

In recent years statistics show that Spain has become the most multi ethnic country of the European Union with high immigration exceeding that of other countries with a long tradition of immigration such as France, Germany or the UK. Globally, a recent study by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) puts Spain at the forefront of the reception of immigrants, only behind the United States. Various statistics confirm that in Spain, due to this multiculturalism, mixed unions came to 34,000 in 2006.<sup>194</sup>

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<sup>194</sup> (Noticias Juridicas, 2008)

### **Initial observations of case environment**

The system itself appears to be so top heavy that judges make many of the final decisions without having had any real contact with the people actually involved in the cases. Upon conducting our initial two training modules in the *Colegio de Abogados*, for about 30 lawyers, it was clear that in the way that the system currently operates, most or all of the major decisions in relationship to cases of domestic violence are taken while all parties involved are still in a state of shock or in what Processwork might call a frozen, or semi-frozen state.<sup>195</sup> For the purpose of this research I will refer to shock as the first response in a situation where one party experiences something happening to them which they feel is out of their control.

An additional statistic highlights here a gender dynamic, which while not a comprehensive set of findings, does serve to highlight the fact that women on the whole are still very much at the receiving end of these attacks.

*According to statistics of the General Council of the Judiciary and the Observatory against domestic and gender violence, the number of complaints in 2012 was 128 543. 19,769 people prosecuted, of whom 19,534 are were men. Aragon's rate of 47.64 complaints per 10,000 women, compares to 53.63 which is the Spanish average...*

### **Description and observations of a typical incident**

According to the information given by the lawyers (in the training and the questionnaires), the classic situation generally unfolds in the following way:

A domestic violence incident occurs and the victim typically will call the emergency services. The police are informed and the lawyer on call will then be contacted to become involved in advising the person of their rights and options, for example, whether to charge the assailant or not or whether to put a banning order in place.

In the role-play activities and training processes that we did with the lawyers, it became clear that often all of these major decisions are taken while the victim is in shock, or is

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<sup>195</sup> (Audergon, Arlene, 2005 p 81)

traumatized and unable to connect with their deeper feelings about the situation in that moment. As discussed in the section on trauma in Chapter Two, this is not a permanent state and individual responses to traumatic events move through a cycle of emotional responses.

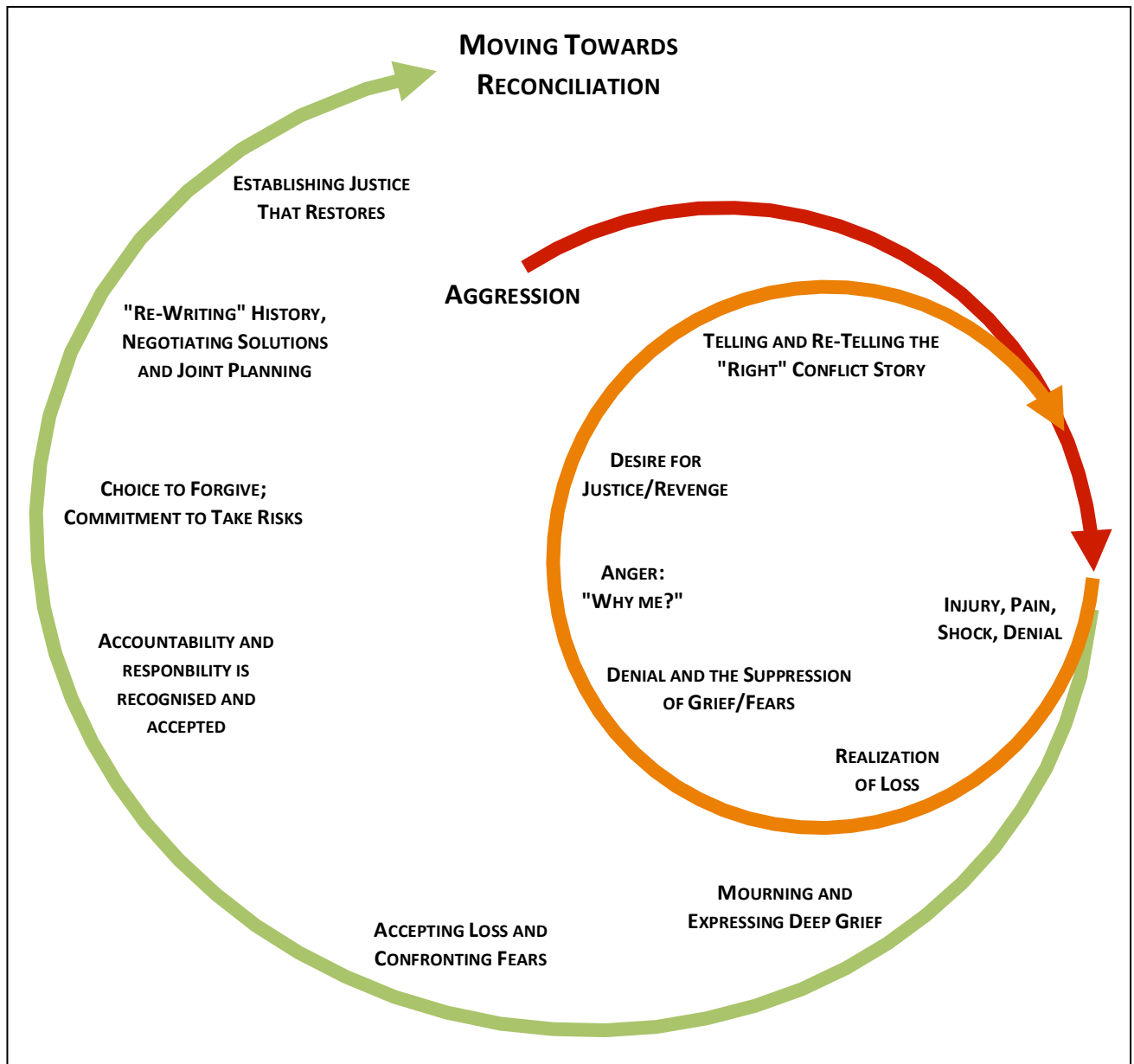


Figure 20: Cycle of Blame/Aggression/Trauma



It is clear from this diagram, and in our experience, that unless there is intervention in the system, there is an extremely high likelihood of the victim seeking revenge or a similar type of incident occurring again.

These decisions are also taken before the victim begins to connect with their deeper feelings about the situation, or to consider in depth the ramifications of their decision on their everyday life. Examples of these ramifications could include the imprisonment of the father of their children or the imposition of a banning order, which forbids any contact between the father and the children.

It is clear that in some, or even many cases, it is essential to protect the safety of the victim and/or any children involved, and/or the perpetrator themselves. However, whether all decisions that affect the lives of those concerned in the long term should be taken simultaneously and in the immediate aftermath of the incident, could potentially be considered to be an ineffective or questionable practice. Until recently it was also illegal to engage in any type of mediation process once a legal process had been instigated, which meant that the only mechanism to try to facilitate any long-term agreements between the parties concerned was a judicial one. Since this judicial process was often lengthy, expensive and in many cases those leading the sessions lacked the facilitation or mediation skills required to reach a long term sustainable outcome, the process often ended in banning orders being broken and reoffending incidents.

### **Analysis**

The main issue as stated by the lawyers when considered from a Processwork perspective is clearly relative and a one-sided. Nevertheless, as an outsider, an external consultant and trainer, this provided me with a lot of information about the field in which I had been invited to work with. There was clearly a lack of awareness of the different roles in the field, and also of the rank dynamics in the background that might be contributing to the situation that lawyers frequently had to deal with: that of young women from Latin America supposedly trying to sue their Spanish husbands for large quantities of money.

From a systemic perspective the presenting issues were clearly biased, based on impressions, and influenced by the majority view, that these Latin women were a

disturbance, and the problem. In the initial analysis of the problem no one questioned what was bringing these Colombian or Cuban women to Spain to marry rich husbands or to find a job. We could assume that these young women immigrate to Spain because in their countries of origin, they do not have the type of equivalent employment or economic opportunities available to Spaniards, and quite possibly there are extenuating circumstances such as climate change, and the socio economic situation, which has influenced their migration.

The terms used by the lawyers to explain the situation indicates a tendency to empathize more closely with one side than the other. We could postulate from the way that the issue was outlined by the lawyers, that they are tending towards feeling sorry for the Spanish men and believing that the Latin American women are actually the problem.

However, when we address the question of justice, we start to realise that on one level, and what I would call the Consensus Reality Level, there is a judicial system in place, which purports to be able to accurately present all relevant aspects of the case, decide what could be considered fair and what would be a just outcome.

Nevertheless, looking at this situation from the various subjective levels or what in Processwork we might call the Dreaming Level, it can be seen that ultimate judgements on what is right or wrong or fair might in fact be influenced by the majority view or the *timespirit*<sup>196</sup> in the Spanish region and reflects tendencies, described in previous case studies, to marginalise minority groups and their rights. Without awareness this can lead towards marginalisation of the perspectives of the immigrant population and give more validity to the rights of Spanish born citizens. Lack of a meta-awareness, of the presence or influence of these attitudes, and therefore the link to subsequent thoughts and behaviours, could influence perceptions of right and wrong and therefore logically influence the positions and opinions of the lawyers and judges.

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<sup>196</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

### Processwork perspective

From a Processwork perspective, looking at this situation through the lens of *deep democracy* and the three dimensions of reality<sup>197</sup>, our perception of 'reality', is framed as three dimensional and comprising of; *consensus reality (CR)*, or the measurable, 'real' level; *the dreaming level*—or subjective dimension of feelings and perceptions filtered through the lenses of our internalised belief systems—personal and collective; and the *sentient*, or non dual dimension which although subtle or intangible, is the source from which many derive meaning and motivation. It would follow that this lack of awareness of the dreaming or more subjective levels, can contribute to the lack of satisfaction, meaning and sense of having done a job well which both the lawyers and the judges have experienced at times. An example of this might be that although the consensus reality outcome of a case might make complete sense from this perspective by complying with the laws of the land, on a deeper level those involved still experience a feeling of dissatisfaction or unease at the outcome which cannot be explained by only looking at the structural level.

We can see from this example the costs of prioritizing only the Consensus Reality level. Attention here is only paid to the overt or measurable data such as legal documents, structures and presenting roles. However—these roles and experiences can be understood much more deeply when unfolded at the dreaming and more subtle levels where roles and rank are not only understood as social constructs. The deeper feeling experiences which connect us with what has a real sense of heart and meaning ultimately support a much more 'felt sense' of resolution when addressed. Inner work, self-awareness and clarity of intention are paramount in reaching this deeper felt sense of resolution or congruence, otherwise the unconscious biases and belief systems, personal and cultural, that inform our feeling and thinking processes will determine the outcome, as people tend to marginalise more 'minority voices' within themselves, which ultimately will often lead to a profound sense of dissatisfaction, or feeling that something is not quite right.

One of the challenges in addressing these deeper 'felt sense' issues, is that many of the edges or belief systems that influence our thinking are culturally held, and so to challenge

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<sup>197</sup> (Ibid.)

these, is not only to challenge something within ourselves—but to challenge the status quo or norms in our organisations and society. This takes courage, and often people will find themselves facing internalised voices or critics, which will attempt to dissuade them.

Some of the ‘symptoms’ being experienced by the legal teams such as feelings of frustration, depression, lack of meaning, ill health or addictive tendencies such as regular or excessive consumption of alcohol and tobacco, can all be seen as indications of this tendency to marginalise lesser known, or minority voices within us. Where there is a lack of congruence between our outer actions and inner feelings and responses. These ‘*mixed signals*’,<sup>198</sup> although not overtly expressed, nonetheless influence the situation, our quality of presence and state of mind/body, as they create an inner tension that starts to express itself through body symptoms, and sometimes in the use of various substances as a way to deal, or minimize disturbing inner experiences.

Considering the situation through the Processwork framework, it could be postulated that when this lack of congruent rightness is experienced on a regular basis, it could lead to the sense of lack of meaning and frustration experienced by the legal staff themselves.

It is clear that many of the reactive legal processes initiated to try to solve these cases in a ‘just’ manner, do not encompass the deeper level, which contains a deep felt sense of resolution, nor do they effectively address the presenting issues in the long term.

One could postulate that this top heavy and over loaded legal system is no longer able to deal with many of the increased demands of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, including the huge influx of multi-cultural migrant populations in the area. This highlights a highly complex and cross cutting issue of an ever increasing global migrant population of legal and illegal immigrants and asylum seekers who are forced to leave their home lands due to economic and environmental devastation and/or war. All of these situations are linked directly or indirectly to the current globalised economy where there are no longer trade barriers in place, which previously protected local economies.

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<sup>198</sup> See Chapter Three

In light of the above, and the fact that the group of lawyers in question was particularly progressive, it is not entirely surprising that they intuitively realised a piece of the picture was missing, and that they needed to learn skills which might enable them to provide services including facilitation of restorative justice practices as a complementary service and one which would not solely provide legal solutions, but would also more adequately address some of the underlying and deeper issues.

### **Processwork related insights**

What is clear from the feedback from the training course is that participants working on their own inner limiting belief systems, or edges, is at least as much of the work needed in order to change the legal system, as getting mediation and conflict facilitation<sup>199</sup> recognised as a valid step in the reconciliation process. To further illustrate this point, half way through our programme the law in certain regions of Spain changed, and suddenly mediation trainings began to attract funding and endorsement from the local government and the Chamber of Commerce, a hugely influential institution in the Zaragoza region.

This legal change on the Consensus Reality level also facilitated a deepening and increased capacity in the group's ability to work on their personal edges as their choice to work with mediation and facilitation was validated externally by the local government. In this new context they realised that the reason for not setting up mediation type services had not only been because of the outer restrictions that had been in place, but that these reflected an internal lack of belief in, or support for this type of work. After external validation, they were able to see more clearly and could no longer blame the external structure as the impediment to introducing mediation/facilitation services. It became clear that one of the real obstacles now was of an internal nature (feeling inadequate or lacking confidence or skills), and also focused around concern about addressing relationship issues with each

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<sup>199</sup> For the purpose of this research there is a distinction between mediation and process oriented conflict facilitation. Mediation is more outcome-oriented and, while it can offer more scope of dialogue and consequently a more satisfying resolution, process oriented conflict facilitation also focuses on emotions and multiple dimensions of experience in a way that traditional mediation does not. However—for our clients, trained in both approaches, they found that they were able to usefully combine both approaches depending on what each situation required.

other which might arise and times when they would need to work on such issues as team work, inclusion and exclusion, competition, and all of the opportunities and challenges that can arise in a new venture involving other people.

The feedback given by participants after completing the two-year programme has been insightful, and the most important elements of this are shared below.

Processwork has a significant personal development, or *inner work*, component and the feedback from these course participants showed clearly that this was an essential element of the transformational process that they underwent on personal and professional level and in addressing the system of which they are a part. As we progressed through the training it became clear that a large part of what prevented the existing system from being challenged or changed by lawyers who wanted to incorporate mediation skills, was the internal belief systems or *edges*<sup>200</sup> of the participants themselves who felt, or believed that it was not possible. This brings to mind a quote from Alice Walker in which she states that

*the most common way that people give up their power is by thinking that they don't have any.*<sup>201</sup>

### **Participants' feedback**

Course participants were struck by the depth of the personal transformation that they underwent in what they had thought would be a purely professional course. Becoming aware of and exploring their own limiting belief systems and inner critics, enabled them to acknowledge and better understand the many conscious and unconscious influences that they themselves were having on a mediation process, and to understand and empathise with the roles others were playing in a given situation.

Some of them were very surprised to have discovered *edges* that they had not previously known existed, and this led to them feeling more congruence within themselves. As a result, group members began communicating in a more congruent way and this naturally led to an increased quality of presence of each group member, and in the group as a whole.

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<sup>200</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

<sup>201</sup> (Martin, William P, 2004 p.173)

Participants were positively surprised that it was possible to create such a strong bond between participants who were all professional lawyers.

With greater inner congruence came greater self-confidence, which also instilled more confidence in others with whom they interacted. They commented that their attitudes towards conflict had shifted. One participant commented that she now sees “conflict as a positive living thing”.

### **Outcomes**

From this space of greater security and trust in themselves, and in their capacity to sense situations and react appropriately, they began to gain more confidence in the possibility they could mediate successfully, and in the second year of the training some participants started to practice mediation.

Since we began the course at least four of the participants have begun their own mediation/facilitation practices alongside their existing legal practices. The feedback below taken from answers to the end of training questionnaire, gives an overall sense of some the most significant changes that have contributed to their openness and confidence in starting to use process orientated mediation and facilitation alongside their traditional working methods.

One of the key lessons for participants was gaining an understanding of the concept of *roles*.<sup>202</sup> They became conscious of the roles that they themselves play, that others play and the possibility of playing various roles. They were able to acknowledge the many conscious and unconscious influences that they themselves were having on a mediation process. Many of them gained an increased understanding of their own behaviour and responses in conflict situations and they commented on this leading to experiencing increased tolerance, respect and flexibility towards other peoples’ views and perspectives.

All commented that the coherence between theory and practice in the course, and the large amount of practical exercises, had been extremely helpful and supportive of future practice.

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<sup>202</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

A key theme in feedback was also a sense of increased self-confidence and security and greater trust in their ability to deal with situations involving conflict.

This table of information, (see Appendix 8), was gathered from questionnaires that were filled in at the end of the eight-module course. The participants filled these out by hand in the classroom. The information was typed up, translated it into English, and organized into the following categories. The comments on the right hand side are direct translations of the participants' comments.

This concluding set of comments and feedback is from one of our participants. Alongside his existing legal practice he successfully set up a parallel mediation and facilitation service while he was working with us. His comments give a balanced overview of the typical feedback we received from many of the participants.

#### Inner Work (Translated Feedback from Spanish into English)

I have found inner work during the training really interesting to enrich my life. Both, from a personal point of view, as well as a way to deepen in conflict facilitation. I would like to highlight:

1. Being aware of my secondary process has helped me to:
  - To know my inner diversity, (different contradicting viewpoints), and to accept all my emotions, especially those ones that I would usually deny. To learn how differentiating between my emotions reality and my emotional expressions.
  - To find the useful essence of my secondary process. It helps me to face certain situations, avoiding prejudices and stereotypes.
2. To work edges and belief systems.
3. According to my usual way of facing conflict, my initial tendency is avoiding conflict. The training has helped me to be able to welcome diversity and conflict.

About the mediation project in parallel to the judicial system that I am working with.

The training has helped me to gain a sense of my skills and have faith in them when initiating and developing projects I have been assigned to. In specific terms, it has helped



me to act in a systematic way in the mediation process and has highlighted the relevance of the contract and hypothesis<sup>203</sup> concepts.

1. TRUST the system. I love one of Gill's sentences during the first day of the training (October 2009, so long ago!): "Every conflict looks for a solution. The system (also the conflict) looks for a balance." I often remember this sentence during mediation sessions, especially when I am blocked and it helps me to relax and find fluidity.
2. Accept DIVERSITY, being aware of my prejudices, trying to 'suspend' them during interventions.
3. Follow my own FEELINGS AND SENSATIONS during the facilitation process. This helps me to:
  - a. Be a facilitation tool.
  - b. Reflect what is happening, going beyond my own tendency to 'want to solve it at any cost'.
4. Give value to tram work, learning to add skills from all participants.

The training has helped me to:

1. TRUST myself. The way you do the training expresses authenticity and professionalism. It inspires me.
2. My primary process come from a rational and logic thinking to systematize a training. Now I have a complementary work, looking at emotions, spirit as well as game and playfulness.
3. I have learnt brilliant tools and exercises to develop and work, as *inner critic* and *the worst mediator in the world*. This brings sense of humour and lightness.

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<sup>203</sup> The term hypothesis means to create a structural analysis that looks at, as much as possible on the entirety of the information that's present in the system, ie—all three levels, the measurable and the more subtle or subjective experiences. With this in mind she then looks at what part of the information a person/group is identified with and what part of the information they dis-identify with. On this basis it is possible to create a 'working hypothesis' about what is components of the field are more primary or known, what are more secondary or less known, and what the edge figures, ghost roles and even time spirits might be. The structural analysis then helps us to create a hypothesis of what stops them from identifying with all the information in the system.

## Conclusions

According to this case study, inner work is proven to play a vital role in mediation and facilitation skills training and practice including in professional contexts where it is lesser seen or traditionally recognized as a useful activity. In the judicial system, consensus reality is the over-identified level (legal terms and papers) and therefore other levels of reality are often marginalized. These roles and experiences can be understood much more deeply when unfolded at the dreaming and more subtle levels where roles and rank are not only understood as social constructs.

As many of the edges or belief systems that influence our thinking are culturally held, therefore to challenge these, is not only to challenge something within ourselves but also to challenge the status quo or norms in our organisations and society. Finding other ways to complement the current system that address these experiences of lack of deeper satisfaction sometimes felt by lawyers and judges can also lead to a deeper resolution for all the people involved in the resolution processes including the Latin American women and Spanish men.

The Lawyers' symptoms illustrate another way of perceiving what Arnold Mindell calls the *dreaming body*. These are experiences or parts of ourselves that we tend to marginalise because they do not support our primary or known identity. However, these experiences do not disappear and appear in our unintentional signals, body symptoms, addictions, and disturbances that seem to happen to us. Processwork assumes inherent meaning in these experiences.

The following points summarize learning /specific areas where Processwork has made an added contribution.

- Less familiar parts of the judicial system such as humour and emotions have emerged as part of the training skills and received positive feedback, as they can be introduced as 'homeopathic remedies' to the system. In Processwork terms these are known as meta-skills.
- The organization in this case, the judicial system, has over-loaded its practices in legal practices, and therefore restorative justice and mediation practices are marginalized.

- In the context of globalisation, what is 'just' or 'fair' is highly complex and multi-faceted. Current legal solutions often do not see the whole picture which is a contributing factor in the current overwhelm being experienced by out-dated systems. Processwork, as a whole systems approach brings awareness of the bigger context within which the Spanish legal system is operating and highlights some of the global influences and time spirits. This broader perspective can make it easier to create a structural analysis of the different factors influencing their clients and consequently support them to identify the leverage points that will effect the most long term sustainable outcomes, as opposed to short lived solutions which do not last, as described above in the description of domestic violence.

The multi-dimensional framework of deep democracy provided a framework for a much broader, multidimensional framework as the setting for the presenting issue initially framed as an issue between the Latin American women and Spanish men. It became clear that there were many unresolved issues, and cultural biases inner and outer, along with the global socio economic situation that informed the situation.

Awareness was gained about the difference between the skills needed by a lawyer and the skills needed by a mediator. One of the main additions provided by Processwork was the awareness needed to sit in the field with clients and facilitate an interaction between them that was not only on the Consensus Reality level. The skills to track signals and subtle signals, internal and external experiences, and to perceive them all as information about the situation they are trying to facilitate was a radical reframe for many.

An unexpected finding in this case study was the influence that the course had in the personal lives of the participants. All the participants came to the training primarily to learn additional facilitation skills and mediation skills. Many of them were very surprised to realise that the training spilled into their personal lives, shifting their perspective, and deepening their relationship to many aspects of their lives.

Developing the ability to do inner work, or to track one's own internal experience as a facilitator, played a key role in this training and contributed hugely to the shift in atmosphere and ability to facilitate complex situations.

This in turn led to the cultivation of increased internal fluidity, less unconscious biases and the emergence of eldership, with its meta skill of caring for the whole system and all its parts, rather than setting out to win the argument, as had been the case at the beginning of the training.

### Case Study 3: Thailand (Siam)



Figure 21: Wongsanit Group 2011

### Background

I was originally invited to go and work in Thailand (Siam)<sup>204</sup> with grassroots leaders and activists in 2009. The trainings took place in Wongsanit Ashram which is a training centre and retreat centre founded by Sulak Sivaraksa and run by the Sathirakoses-Nagapradeepa Foundation,<sup>205</sup> both of which are described in detail later in this section.

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<sup>204</sup> The country of Thailand was known as Siam until 1939, when the name was changed to a hybrid, anglicised word. For many, this name signifies the crisis of traditional values.

<sup>205</sup> (Sulak Sivaraksa, 2014)

## Processwork in a Socially Engaged Buddhist cultural context

*Those who want to change society must understand the inner dimensions of change.*<sup>206</sup>

*Sulak Sivaraska*

Both Processwork and Socially Engaged Buddhist practice insist that inner reflective work is an essential part of the process for informing effective and healthy facilitation, dialogue and (inter)action.

After experiencing Processwork at Findhorn I was invited by a now friend and colleague Pracha Hutunuwat, to Thailand to train some of the community leaders that he had been working with in various parts of Thailand initially and then later in Burma. I believe he invited me because he was able to recognise some of the contributions that Processwork can make in increasing self-awareness and congruence of activists, leaders and teachers and therefore the effectiveness of their work. This theory was borne out in practice during trainings and individual lives. My observations are discussed and analysed in more detail later on in this case study.

### Historical & Cultural Context

I will illustrate the cultural context of this case study based in Thailand by touching on the work, observations and theories of Sulak Sivaraksa. In doing so, a general pattern will become visible that is seen between many developing and developed countries which were, and continue to be, subjected to the economic and cultural restructuring of globalisation and capitalism without adequate forethought for the long term sustainability of each bio region, and its bio cultural diversity. Sulak Sivaraska refers to this as *structural violence*, a term which refers to the structural adjustments imposed by the World Bank, usually on third world countries in order to receive loans.<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> (Sulak, Sivaraksa , 2009, p. 89)

<sup>207</sup> Structural Adjustments—These adjustments - often deregulation and privatization—are intended to generate wealth. Although the Bretton Woods institutions who created the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund to generate prosperity for all, and have as their mission to eradicate poverty, in fact the these

As soon as one looks at the current global situation through the lens that perceives everything on earth as inextricably linked and interdependent, we can start to see clearly how one thing leads to another thing happening. For example, over fishing in the global context, (currently our global fish stocks have been reduced by 90%)<sup>208</sup> has had the knock on effect of migration by forcing local people to migrate looking for work, and in turn creating perhaps “contributing towards” (fishermen only make up a small portion of immigrants) many of the immigration problems which we now see in Europe and other richer nations. People in this type of situation formed some of the client base that the lawyers I worked with in Zaragoza (Spain) were concerned with, and also experienced related problems of racism, poverty, etc. From a Processwork perspective the dynamics of rank, power and privilege are central to this discussion and to understanding the socio-cultural impact of the current globalised economic situation.<sup>209</sup>

Sulak Sivaraksa is one of Asia’s leading social thinkers and activists and his work includes writing over one hundred books in Thai and English and founding the International Network of Engaged Buddhists and many other educational and political grassroots organisations. He is well-known for his book “The Wisdom of Sustainability, Buddhist Economics from the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, which highlights small scale, sustainable alternatives to globalisation based on Buddhist principles which are applicable to Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike. Although Sivaraksa is based in Asia, his methods and thinking are relevant globally and on local and national levels.

After a violent coup in Thailand in 1976, he worked together with a close colleague Nicholas Bennett, most recently of the United Nations and the World Bank, to create the first human rights organisation in Thailand. Over a three year period they managed to release more than 11,000 political prisoners from prison.

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institutions and instruments they created have brought about increased inequality in wealth, as well as environmental degradation. The Wisdom of Sustainability, (Sulak, Sivaraksa , 2009)

<sup>208</sup> (Murray, 2009)

<sup>209</sup> (See Glossary of Terms for rank, power and privilege)

Sivaraksa writes about and analyses globalisation, development, violence and governance through a Buddhist lens. He refers to globalisation as:

*Free-market fundamentalism—a demonic religion imposing materialistic values on developing as well as industrialized nations, driving individuals to try to earn more to acquire more in a never-ending cycle of greed and insecurity.*<sup>210</sup>

*Sivaraksa, Sulak 2009*

He describes the establishment of the United Nations following the end of the Second World War and the creation of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund as having been an attempt to generate prosperity and equality for rich and poor nations alike. Although the initial impulse was sincere in its attempt to eradicate poverty, the structures created to facilitate this have caused even more inequality in wealth, along with extensive environmental degradation and a huge loss of culture and sense of belonging and extreme and widespread poverty.

Sivaraksa argues that the assumed superiority of industrialization, the monetary economy, and modernisation over agrarian lifestyles, subsistence economies and indignity, makes globalisation simply a new form of colonisation. He believes that in order to replace this system with one which creates less inequality and ensures effective bioremediation of large areas of the planet, human-scale, local, sustainable alternatives to globalized industry should be introduced.

He believes that healing the planet starts by creating sustainability at both the individual and global levels. Meditation, non-violence and the simple practice of breathing is at the heart of his work. Among Sivaraksa's students there are many young people who want to play a role in a more human-centred development process. This approach, which works through developing an individual's ability to meditate, to practice breathing and be reflective has meant that socially engaged Buddhists tend to have an existing base for working with Processwork techniques, given that students already arrive with the understanding that inner work is crucial for outer change.

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<sup>210</sup> (Sulak, Sivaraksa , 2009 p10)

## Organisational Context—Wongsanit Ashram

*Wongsanit Ashram was established in 1985 as an intentional community for simple living and for engaging in social action and spiritual practice. Since its early years, the Ashram has been actively involved in many community projects. The Ashram seeks to develop and promote an alternative lifestyle that is grounded in Dharma<sup>211</sup> cultural diversity, and environmental sustainability. In essence, it attempts to point out the interconnection between humans, society, and nature. Residents of the Ashram are mostly social activists, living simply in traditional-style houses with few modern conveniences. Many workshops are held at the Ashram including courses related to green politics, social justice, non-violence, and engaged spirituality. These workshops provide a holistic education for students, monks, nuns, and grassroots community leaders.<sup>212</sup>*

*Wongsanit Ashram, 2012*

Wongsanit Ashram is run by the Sathirakoses-Nagapradeepa Foundation (SNF), a Thai non-governmental organisation (NGO) founded in 1968 by Sulak Sivaraksa and guided by a spiritual, environmental, and activist vision. The Foundation is named after the two late prominent Thai scholars, Sathirakoses and Nagapradeepa, who were the intellectual link of traditional and modern Thai society. Members of the Foundation work at the grassroots, national, regional and international levels for freedom, human rights, traditional cultural integrity, social justice and environmental protection. They believe that outer change is not possible without inner change and place great importance on personal development and spiritual practice. This inextricable link between inner and outer is also central to Mindell's work as described in Chapter Two, and for this reason Processwork was seen as a particularly relevant approach, given its emphasis on both inner and outer action.

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<sup>211</sup> Dharma Etymologically, the word *Dhamma* (Sanskrit: *Dharma*) is derived from the root "*dham*," meaning "to uphold" or "to support," and the commentary further explains that it is that which upholds or supports the practitioner (of Dhamma) and prevents him or her from falling into states of misery or birth in a woeful existence. Of all Buddhist terminology, the word Dhamma commands the widest, most comprehensive meaning. *Dharma* is to cultivate the knowledge and practice of laws and principles that hold together the fabric of reality, natural phenomena and personality of human beings in dynamic interdependence and harmony. (Wikipedia, 2013)

<sup>212</sup> (Wongasit Ashram, 2013)





**Figure 22: Thai Guardian of the Threshold**

### **Case Study**

The participants in Thai group who came for personal and professional development to the week-long trainings that I ran over the following four years were people from all over Thailand including various universities, such as the university in Chang Rai, Majidol University and about 15 monks and abbots from various Thai monasteries and a selection of grassroots activists and leaders, youth leaders and training program leaders. Several participants also came from the tsunami area in Southern Thailand, where they ran support programmes for ethnic integration migrant workers women's networks. We also explored some of the underlying issues of trauma that we were able to begin to address in some of these trainings.

### **Course Design/Curriculum**

The three in-depth six-day immersion courses in Awakening Leadership that I ran over a period of two years from 2010—2012 aimed to give the participants additional expertise that would support them to develop the skills needed to engage in these situations in different way. This training programme is designed to promote the participants' development and improve their facilitation skills. Understanding that subjective or emotional, and personal experiences are intrinsic to awakening leadership and facilitation, the programme blends theory with experiential skills, personal growth and awareness. It is designed to increase the facilitator's awareness of his or her cultural attitudes,

communication style, relationship skills and the effect these have on group life and conflict situations. The objective of the initiative is to use the training process itself to create a seed group specialised in facilitating in complex situations, who will be capable of working directly in conflict situations, facilitating more effectively in their own organisations and building viable partnerships between organisations.

The modules were largely experiential, underpinned by theoretical frameworks.

Some of the themes covered were:

- *Systemic understanding of roles analysis and group facilitation*
- *Diversity related issues such as gender, race, class and how they play out in society and this context.*
- *Power, rank and privilege and their relation to conflict*
- *Conflict and culture (in general and specifically in this context)*
- *Developing our own inherent leadership and facilitation style and skills to work with inherent blocks/edges*
- *Cultivating a deep understanding of the mutually supportive relationships between body, mind and spirit*
- *Fostering natural resilience through our relationship with the natural world*
- *Deep democracy and Eldership as essential meta-skills of the awakened leader*
- *Centering skills for the facilitator under fire*
- *Skills to work with emotionally intense situations*
- *Communication: feedback, criticism and double signals*
- *Role dynamics and their multidimensional nature*
- *How to use our own reactions and situations as part of the facilitation process*
- *Understanding how feelings of pride, revenge and shame can influence conflict*
- *Understanding the relation between inner conflict, relationships, group conflict and the larger social context*

For more detailed information about these trainings, including course content and material used, please see documents referred to in (Appendices 9 and 10).

### **Case Study Data & Analysis**

One of the key insights that was identified in the Thai training is that within the Buddhist



**Figure 23: Monks attending course at Wongsanit**

culture there is a lot of emphasis on self-awareness, meditation practice, Vipassana, where cultivating the observer is studied and practiced and meta-skills. Consequently, one of the key questions, which arose for me in this context was what can Processwork contribute. I researched this through a series of conversations with some of the participants, and through my own observations and experience while facilitating the trainings. Some of these are shared below as extracts from conversations, group process, and inner work descriptions. The conversations have been broken down into sections and analysed as a way of framing the answers illustrated in each extract to the key questions posed in this dissertation.

### **Interview**

Conversation with a participant, (N), who was a Buddhist monk for 19 years in the Theravada tradition.

(N) is also a very experienced Tai Chi practitioner, with many years of experience working as a trainer at the grassroots level in Thailand, Burma, Cambodia, Laos and India. His contemplative practice has included sitting a three-year silent retreat, and many shorter

ones. After the first seminar at the ashram, he decided to translate *Sitting in the Fire*<sup>213</sup>, with no previous translation experience and has since returned to do further trainings and to assist me in some of the programmes in Burma. Just before the first training that (N) participated in with me, he had recently disrobed, (left his monastic order), to get married, which was considered to be almost a taboo subject in that context, and is still not spoken about freely in some settings. In the case study below (N) speaks about his experience in Processwork terms. (N) now lives with his wife and their beautiful 3-year-old daughter. From a Processwork perspective the courageous action that both (N) and his now wife took, to follow their hearts and what felt deeply right illustrates how challenging it can be to challenge social or spiritual belief systems or 'edges'. They are building an ecological training centre and working as trainers in grassroots and business settings. I recently spoke with him about his experiences of Processwork and what he had found particularly useful. Here are some extracts from our conversation.<sup>214</sup>

**(Q: Gill; A: (N))**

Q. What do you find most useful about Processwork?

A. Yes. It's something like .. a body language or the.. you know the.. how to say.. it's like .. when we.. for example when we enter the room and then we see something, the colour, the wall or something like this, this is a.. we can observe by our eyes..

Q. Mm.

A. And how to say, it's like a when the members of the workshop come, something like this, we can see their own body language.. this is I know.. already known before.

Q. Mm huh.

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<sup>213</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 1995)

<sup>214</sup> Transcripts are as close to the original conversation as possible. However, for ease of understanding in situations where direct translation might be very unclear, or English is a second or third language of the person speaking, slight editorial changes have been made.

A. But when... yes... but when I learn from you or the group process of process work, you know it's like a... the way how people express their opinions... sometime... from their own body language like a double signal which is a new for me.

and the.. when we related to other person or to the group, when I do some workshop like this yes, when something in my body ..... come out. Maybe some kind of healing comes up, maybe afraid, fear come up, something like this.

### Interview Analysis

(N) highlights here that the understanding of double or unintentional signals, either in the body language of the other members of the group, or his own proprioceptive<sup>215</sup> experience, as information about the field, or atmosphere that he is facilitating or participating in, has been very helpful in identifying some of the underlying issues and atmosphere in the groups.

Q. And.. how does that differ from your experience like as a Buddhist practitioner for example? I guess that interconnection and inside outside connection is also part of that.. or not?

A. Yes. Erm.. actually.. for me even compared to Buddhist term, interconnection is the same or look very similar but when.. ..when I learn from Buddhist practice mostly when we talk about meditation or something like this you know.. er.. we miss the point.

Q. [audible smile]

A. I mean, the concept is very good, we appreciate the concept, interconnection. But mostly we miss the point, we can't see. We look over..you know.. I mean..when many times when we practice in Buddhist term we just keep on, you know close our eyes and [smiling-amused]then do meditation, something like this.. and yeah..

Q. So..

A. But in reality..

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<sup>215</sup> (See the Glossary of Terms

Q. Mm huh.

A. When how to apply this concept to the..you know, daily life, how to apply to the workshop, something like this.. is still really only the concept.

[Q. Mm.] But in the group process work, in the process work it's like a..it's applying

A. [Q.Mm. Beautiful] apply this concept in the process, so this is a very good example to show us to, you know..to understand the concept not only something like a theory, but some kinds of application

Q. Hot spot<sup>216</sup> to say that we as Buddhist practitioners we miss the point? [laughs]

[A. laughs] Or not?

A. Yes, this is from my, from my point of view.

Q. Of course.

A. Many people thought about interconnection, not only Thai, Buddhist..

Q. Yep.

A. You know, but everyone thought about it. But in daily life, or in the workshop or in the relationship with other

Q. Yes. You don't work with it actually in the moment in the daily life, yes..

A. Yes, forget it about the concept you know, just we can blablabla talk about it, but in daily life we forget it.

Q. That's interesting. And what about the.. it makes me think about the three levels you know, like the... sounds like maybe when you talk about the concept of interconnectedness, it's more like a .. I don't know..it's like a consensus reality, like everybody agrees that interconnection is the way, but then the feeling, the deeper feeling of living it moment to

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<sup>216</sup> (See the Glossary of Terms)

moment in relationship doesn't get to deepen through the dreaming level or into the essence level except in meditation, but not in relationship. Is that right?

A. Yes. Yes. I felt like yes..

[Q. Mm] It's become something like a theory or information, but not an experience

### Interview Analysis

(N) highlights here that while the concept of interconnection is central to Buddhism and Buddhist practice in his personal opinion, it often remains more an abstract or mental construct rather than an experience lived from moment to moment. He indicates here an important Processwork contribution, informed by the philosophy of deep democracy, which recognises the significance of Mindell's three dimensional map of reality, along with the channels and signals of communication and a helpful framework for perceiving and applying this perspective in all areas of life and work.

I have found working in spiritual or religious organisations, whether this be with Buddhist monks and nuns, Catholic nuns or more 'new age' spiritual communities such as Findhorn, that there is often a strong connection to the Sentient level, but frequently the challenge then lies in how to bring this into daily life when dealing with our inner selves, our relationships with one another and the organisations and the practicalities of running our businesses etc. Often conflicts do not get resolved as there is a confusion of levels, and/ or we fall into the old paradigm of power over, domination, *survival of the fittest* and marginalisation of minority views in order to stay in charge or in control. While access to a command and control style of leadership may be needed in certain situations (i.e. the house is burning down—we need to get out), as a long-term style, it does not reflect the interconnected nature of life, and ultimately can become violent and oppressive. Getting to a deeper felt sense of resolution can be facilitated with awareness of the field that (N) mentioned.

Often in a meditation practice we are trained to observe or notice disturbances and to keep coming back to our breath, or a point of stillness or an image. This is a way to access a deep sentient state and in a way tunnels under the edge where we may experience critics and disturbances which do not go along with our deepest state. However, while reflecting with

some of the monks and abbots who attended one of the Awakening Leadership courses at the ashram—an aspect of Processwork practice that they found particularly valuable was to notice that often, when unfolded with awareness, there is an essence of something useful in the disturbance, and that unconsciously, they might tend to marginalize this when a disturbance arises which there is a strong belief system against..i.e.—sexual desire might arise in a celibate monk. Without awareness he might just try to push this to one side, and use his will to override this.. However, there are so many cases of inappropriate sexual activity in celibate communities that this might indicate that this approach does not actually work in many cases on a consensus reality level, rather showing a systemic reaction to marginalization, and a consequent reaction.

During the training I facilitated the inner experience of a senior monk who attended the training and he found it helpful to have support to bring awareness to the whole experience, the desire, the belief systems against it, and to then go into the ‘disturbance’, and find the essence of what was useful—which in this case was a vibrant creative life energy, much needed in the temple and in his role as Abbott.

Returning to the conversation with (N) he later reflected on how helpful the awareness of rank, power and privilege was in his daily life with his partner as well as in his work facilitating groups. He shared the following experience.

Q. I was wondering, as you translated *Sitting in the Fire*<sup>217</sup> and have some understanding of the theory of rank, power and privilege, if find that awareness useful to you?

A. Of course. This is another important concept in Processwork for me. Erma..actually it’s like a.. as a monk.. when we are in monkhood. It is look like we are in some kinds of the spiritual role or the role that people expect for us to be something like that.

[Q. Ah yeah] To be a teacher, to be a good monk, something like this.

A. Er..before I learn from the Processwork, we think is that the highest rank is the spiritual rank and the most important one.

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<sup>217</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 1995)



[Q. Mm] But now when we learn about the three levels of reality and er..the three kinds of rank. Like er..every level is important.

Q. Mm.

A. So just how to (be) aware when to use your rank, whatever kinds of rank, social rank, or psychological rank or you know spiritual rank. It can turn out like a good or bad if you don't aware of it.

[Q. Mm] So this is like er also, it's like a..to more aware about to use our rank in the relationship. In my family, [I and my wife Ja] I help us..sometime we have some angry.. [smiling] angry to.. you know, with each other, often get angry sometime.

A. But it, I think because of the different rank..

Q. Ah. Like what do you think the difference in rank is?

A. Yes, make me argue with an emotional argue.

Q. Yeah.

A. Arguing something like a..yeah.. as a, I am a man, and then I take the role, it's like a.. some.. like a.. you know, ex-monk who have a lot of experience or practice, something like this..

Q. Really annoying. [laughs]

A. [laughs] Yes. And..

Q. One sometimes.

A. And I take your answer, facilitator is many years.

Q. Yes.

A. And sometime I learn to talk something like about a philosophy or something like a..you know, Lao Tsu, Kung Chu..

Q. Yep. Yep.

A. About the Buddha, something like this. It's so far away, the concept is so far away [Q. Yep] from daily life.

Q. Yep.

A. But Ja, she is like a from Chinese family, she is very realistic, she think about how to survive.

Q. Mm.

A. How to earn money, you know, she have a lot of work to do, like a..you know to take care of Haiku to many person, something like this, so it's like er we.. we have different rank. [tearing paper sound]

[Q. Yep] And when I've ignore some part of her role or her rank then I like er, talk something like a more monk talk to..to the lay people, you know. So, she's..she feels unhappy or not happy with me.

Q. Yes.

A. Something like this, because I look back and I try to analyse

[Q. Mm] Rank is a very very fluid..and you know, in relationship you do see it when people live together for many years and I know her very well. She knew me very well, something like this.

Q. Yes. That's a great example. So do you think that with this awareness of rank that helps you to be more fluid in yourself, like not to be so..like you.. do you realise at the time sometimes that that's what's happening and then you can facilitate that, or change your behaviour, or she.. or?

A. Mm huh. Actually, I cannot change my behaviour yet. It's like a..[A. laughs, Q. laughs]you know, it's a.. it's very helpful in a sense like a.. I.. I.. how to say.. I respond to some kinds of..you know.. I response..actually I react

A. think of my rank.

Q. Mm.

A. And..and try to think from her side, you know. [Q. Mm] Try to aware about, yeah, what's going on between us, something like this, [Q. Mm] and try to open for, you know, communication between all of us.Um..

### Interview Analysis

(N) is reflecting here on how the awareness of rank dynamics has helped him to understand and address some of the conflicts and challenges which arise in his relationship. Coming from the background of having very high spiritual rank in Thai society as a senior monk, although he no longer is in that position in society, internally he can still tend towards acting in a superior kind of way with his wife, for example, quoting Lao Tsu when she is worried about how they are going to pay the electricity bill, or get their kid to school. Understandably—this can lead to tension, and (N)'s own understanding of deep democracy and the need to value all three levels as equally important aspects of life has helped him to become aware of his own behaviour, and perhaps her of hers also. A good elder is someone who can be:

*Hot like a fire and cool like water,  
Heavy like a rock and light like cotton,  
Sharp like a knife and blunt like a hammer,  
Pointed like a needle and dull like a mortar*

*Puttee Johnny, Karen People, Thailand*

### Eldership & Meta-skills

Moving on from (N)'s story and using the following example, I would like to illustrate the Processwork concepts of *eldership and meta-skills*, which are concepts central to a Deeply Democratic perspective.

Briefly described, Eldership is a term, which was coined by Arnold Mindell and means the following:

*The ability to understand, empathize with and support conflicted individuals or groups on all sides of an issue simultaneously and compassionately. It is also a universal meta-skill; coming from your deepest self and its direction. This skill involves Deep Democracy plus the sense that the world is your child -interweaving the sense of the equal importance of individual viewpoints and the grand mystery behind it all.<sup>218</sup>*

Arnold Mindell, 1995



**Figure 24: Koren Elders at home in Northern Thailand, 2011**

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<sup>218</sup>(Mindell, Arnold, 1995, p51)

There are inherent problems with the idea of leadership, because leadership is often culturally identified. Leaders often tend to identify with the dominant culture's leadership style power paradigm. This also happens in part because they get *dreamed up*<sup>219</sup>, (pulled by the field to fill in a particular role) by the organization, society or country as the one who is supposed to have all the power and to be 'the one who has the answers. From a Process Work perspective however, leadership is a role, along with many others in an ever-changing field. Potentially it is a fluid role and any member of the group could fill it in any moment, if not on a Consensus reality level certainly on the Dreaming level.

Eldership, is a universal meta skill—a feeling attitude with which one approaches life—arising from one's deepest self and its direction. It involves a willingness to embrace the diversity of all the voices involved and the sense that the world is your child and it also sees the larger picture, the long term, the eternal and spiritual as well as the momentary and political.

In the training I asked my translator, ex monk and long term activist and leader (B), if he would be willing to demonstrate an exercise in the middle of the group as an example. The following illustrates the importance of having access to this perspective.

### **Inner Work Exercise Extract– Connecting to our Sense of Eldership through our Sense of our Deep Self**

(G: Gill; P: Participant)

G. Think to yourself, what qualities does an elder have and give an example of someone who has inspired you?

P. Like the Monk whose painting hangs here in this room, walked with a group of monks and lay people from this ashram to the centre of Cambodia during some of the most violent times of the Kammerouge. A completely unarmed peace march. He was courageous, willing to put his own life as risk, centred, calm, clear, contemplative and acting at the same time.

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<sup>219</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

G. Think of a situation you would have liked to have been able to lead or facilitate with more eldership.

P. A participant in one of my groups challenged me and I was very harsh in my response to him, and basically used my position to shut him up.

G. Describe the situation to yourself and see if you can find the main polarity in that field. Summarize each side in a phrase or two.

P. The main polarity was on one hand the participant who annoyed me, and on the other side—me getting angry and reacting and judgemental.

G. Now, stand and move a little bit. Sense your deepest self, whatever that means to you. Where is it located in your body, in the moment? This is an intuitive question; trust your body tells you where it is.

P. It is deep in my lower abdomen, and when I connect with that place in the moment I notice that my breathing becomes a slower and deeper.

G. With what spot on earth do you associate that body experience and sound? This could be a real place where you have been or a spot on earth, in nature that you imagine now. When you are ready go there in your imagination. Feel yourself being there.

P. I remember as a young monk, sitting on the hill overlooking the valley as the sun rose and meditating there. I felt deeply connected to my deepest sense of self and also expanded, very connected to the earth and the heavens above. I felt very expansive and peaceful at the same time.

G. From this sense of your deepest self, think back to the situation you would have liked to elder and allow yourself to interact in any way that comes to you. Notice your feeling attitude toward each side and the situation as a whole.

P. When I look back at the original situation from here, I see it differently. I can see that young man felt competitive and was challenging me to see how I would deal with him, and I can see myself needing to retain the power in that moment and squashing him. From this place I would act very differently. I would see where he was coming from, his insecurity,

need for connection, approval, and I would have found a way to speak to that, rather than just reacting myself from a place of insecurity or need to retain control. This interaction would have had a very different feel, and I can see how access to this quality of eldership would be hugely helpful in my facilitation. I would more congruently occupy my role of elder and teacher.

The picture below is one of the groups that participated in Processwork trainings with me in Wongsanit Ashram during the research period for this thesis.



**Figure 25: Wongsanit group 2012**

### **Processwork Perspective—Social change happens within a field**

As a processwork facilitator from reading the introduction to these case studies, it is already possible to begin to create a *roles analysis* of the time spirits, roles, ghost roles and historical influences and how they influence the *field*. Mindell suggests that it is not just the presenting issue in Consensus Reality terms that needs to be addressed to resolve a conflict, but the interaction between the different roles and the different dimensions that needs facilitation. Simply stated, there is a hidden structure in the background, which informs the presenting visible structure or presenting phenomena. There is a hidden structure, which organises the visible structure. This is made up of cultural and personal belief systems, time spirits, ghosts roles..and we know that it is there by becoming aware of the incongruent signals, local and non local and the atmosphere we experience as facilitators and participants. We can change the visible structure—but as long as we do not work with the

hidden structure no real change will happen. i.e. you have a Tsar in Russia who is autocratic and dictates everything. There is a revolution that takes over and creates communism. Initially this seems like a very different style of governance driven by a completely different set of values. However, from a Processwork perspective we would say that the role of the autocrat and the role of the follower have not been processed. There has been a role switch on the Consensus Reality level, but not a deeper understanding of those roles. This becomes apparent after a few months when the communist party starts to have some success, but the communist party actually starts to act like the Tsar, with a command and control approach. Then comes Perestroika, a political movement for reformation within the Communist Party of the Soviet Union during the 1980s (1986), widely associated with Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and his policy reforms. There is a seeming temporary resolution in the political atmosphere, but then Putin arrives on world stage and acts again most like the Tsar. This shows that the roles in the background were not processed fully. There are still two principle roles, 1. The autocratic system that has serfdom and now serfdom is being renegotiated and there are 2 roles—the autocratic role and a serf.

This example outlines a structural analysis of the hidden structure that perhaps has contributed to the tensions currently being experienced in Russia. Mindell suggests that awareness, which is brought by clearly seeing the systemic, multi layered context of the situation, can be very helpful in highlighting what interventions are needed and likely to be most effective. A Process orientated facilitator will endeavour to be aware of the field within which they are working, and make a roles analysis, and structural hypothesis prior to, or while facilitating any group.

Another way of thinking about this field might be to look outside at the trees blowing in the in the wind. Although it is not possible to see the wind, it can be heard and represents an invisible force, not only connected to those particular trees or immediate bioregion, but connected to a weather pattern which is interconnected with weather patterns globally, but none the less influence the trees locally. You might think of the actors in a group process or organisation as the trees, and while their presenting issue, 'blowing in the wind', might be perceived as the issue, and may need to be addressed in the short term to mitigate potential damage, there are many other factors at play which would need to be addressed to reach a long term sustainable, multi layered resolution.



The group process extract below taken from the case study in Thailand illustrates this.

### **Group Process Beginning**

The presenting issue of the Group Process was Thai's vs. Non Thais (Farangs<sup>220</sup>) and in particular, the hatred of white non-Thai's, especially teachers or those who are in some way high-ranking individuals. This was specifically linked to the perceived colonisation of the mind and the intellect in Thailand over the last centuries and the current situation where all, or many of the role models for leadership or intellectual acumen are westerners. This theme was proposed by an experienced youth activist leader from the north of Thailand, who up until then had been relatively silent in the training. He had been sitting at the back, often with his hat pulled down over his eyes, with his shoulders hunched over, and regularly going outside to smoke strong smelling tobacco, while at times pacing up and down outside the classroom. His initial point was that surely we should be listening to our own indigenous elders and not bringing in and importing yet more models from the outside, especially in a place like Wongsanit, a social activist training centre.

### **Group Process Analysis**

A key element of the Processwork methodology is to look at the most disturbing position/ aspect of each group process, to focus on it, make it visible and facilitate/help the group to interact with it. When the theme was chosen the atmosphere in the room was tense. For the Thai culture, whose presenting style is to be very polite and generally indirect, to choose such a theme, I imagine particularly with a non-Thai teacher, was uncomfortable for some, and certainly for me as the facilitator. The youth activist who proposed the theme and added hatred of non Thai's to the agenda was in some way, consciously or unconsciously already naming a *ghost*, or unnamed role or perspective in the field. Although it felt shocking or surprising to me initially, it was very helpful to bring the core underlying issues to the surface and eventually relieving to the field. The feeling of shock was also a response to the way the theme was proposed. The communication style with which the theme was proposed was surprisingly un-Thai. Very direct, loud and seeming very 'American' in style.

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<sup>220</sup> Farang - Thai term for non Thai nationals within Thailand

From a Processwork perspective the ghost role that we are against we manifest. The youth activist manifested an American style in his way of bringing in his dislike of ‘foreign input’. It is not Thai style to openly challenge the teacher/elder. On a structural level or consensus reality level the presenting issue was –Thai teachers should be teaching here and this level of conversation needs to be facilitated. However—at a dreaming level the American is already present in the activist’s style of communication. He conflicts with me, not in a Thai style. This level of the dialogue also needs to be facilitated if we are to reach even a temporary resolution, the challenge itself will need to be addressed, not just the theoretical content. All the information is in the system, or can be perceived in the atmosphere or field. It just needs to be made explicit by the facilitator with appropriate meta-skills, and rank awareness.

Group Process continued:

This challenging moment is known as a *hot spot*, a shift in atmosphere where a ‘minority voice’ or ‘role’ challenges the mainstream or more central identity of the group.



**Figure 26 Inner work during the workshop**

### **Inner work of the facilitator**

This ‘shock’, or sensation of feeling taken aback by the directness of the proposal is a good illustration of why it is so important for a Process orientated facilitator to do inner work and to know that everything they are experiencing internally is likely to be important information for the field that they are facilitating. In this case—I took a moment, to notice my own inner responses to the content and atmosphere in the moment. I noticed the

different parts within me, the part that was horrified at the idea that I potentially represent a role that is hated and resented, the part that is outraged at the allegation, the part that momentarily takes it personally and feels her professional reputation slipping away, and the part of me that is relieved that this theme is being named so clearly by a participant who previously had seemed very disengaged from the group. The group supported the choice of this theme, so I trusted in the *self-organising*<sup>221</sup> nature of the field, knowing that this must be important to process if the training is going to proceed in the long and short term. I remember thinking that the worst thing that could happen is that they would no longer want to work with me or with the Processwork model. This type of experience we sometimes call a *death walk*<sup>222</sup>, meaning a situation where our central identity is challenged and where we may need to let it go in order to “survive”. An acceptance of thinking that there is nothing more to lose emerges, and to just go ahead, as there was no other way out anyway. The meta-skill of staying fully present and facilitating the interaction of all the parts in spite of their unknown, or unpredictable nature is an example of eldership being embodied by the facilitator in that moment.

It was helpful to remember that these different responses in me are also part of the field and voices in the group and that I will need to facilitate the interaction between them on all levels and not just experience it as a personal attack or criticism.

### **Intervention from the facilitator**

I framed, or *metacommunicated*<sup>223</sup> my inner reflection for the group—naming the shock as something that must have affected not just me, but also the atmosphere in the group, and also that none the less this must be a really important theme to work on. This comment already began to shift some of the tension in the air and also gave permission to the participants to continue to discuss this theme.

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<sup>221</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

<sup>222</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

<sup>223</sup> (Ibid.)

### Group Process Extract

Once the theme of the group process had been selected, we identified the presenting polarities in the group field and invited participants to speak from the different roles.

Fields seem to be troubled by relationships between time spirits. Any polarity or tension between roles and poles can be seen as tension between time spirits...*Group* fields are often polarised into conflicts between competing leaders, between insiders and outsiders, between followers and critics, and between women and men.....*These descriptions, however, are not static or permanent states or oppositions. If one processes these roles by consciously identifying them, playing them, or even temporarily becoming them, they change, Time spirits transform.*<sup>224</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 1993*



**Figure 27: The training room at Wongsanit Ashram**

On a measurable or consensus reality level was the content of this conversation, which shows a diversity of opinion and starts a debate about the validity of whether or not Wongsanit should bring foreign teachers so often or even at all. At the same time, there was a tense atmosphere between the sides, which was expressed in tone of voice, and body language. There are many complex rank dynamics between the participants as those representing Wongsanit were older, or of higher social status and normally it would be considered a Taboo to challenge an older person in this cultural setting. Here we start to see another level, a self-organizing level, which we also call the dreaming level. It is self-organizing because we are not identified with what is happening “to us”, and we cannot

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<sup>224</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 1993 p25)

control it. It is on this self-organizing level that the “ghost roles” can be found in unintended and often non-verbal communications. In this case, we can initially see the irritation of the organisers, and the anger and indignation of the protagonists.

### **Group Process Analysis**

On one hand, we need to learn more from our local indigenous leaders and go back to our roots and on the other acknowledge that the world is changing. If we are to keep up with the times, we have to be open to learning from other sources as well, including westerners. However, this is only the surface level. Below this is the current impact of the globalised economy, what values will help us to grow and learn, what is needed now in the twenty first century, coming to terms with the changes that are already happening, dealing with climate change, the pain in the background of having no say about these changes, the experience of working with many who are marginalised and suffer under the current socio- economic, political, environmental situation. As the different voices begin to be heard the depth of feeling, frustration, sadness and anger that is present is tangible.

### **Intervention from the facilitator**

My goal is to encourage both sides to go over their edges and represent the ghost roles and to fully express the thoughts and feelings that are present, and if the interaction becomes personal between two participants, to focus the conversation between these two until there is a felt sense of resolution or shift in atmosphere between them. This will often relieve the field, and frequently resolves the polarisation at least temporarily. We call this a temporary resolution.

### **Group Process Extract**

At a certain point, I could feel the presence of a ghost role, which had not yet been fully occupied. I could feel the role of the challenger, and I attempted to give voice to this. I stepped forward in the dual role of facilitator and of one of the people who has been directly criticised and spoke the following. “If all foreigners, foreign teachers and western models are banned from Thailand, tomorrow and you could only study with indigenous elders will all your problems be over? Would your lack of confidence, and self-belief be fixed solely by changing this?”

### Analysis:

From a group process structural perspective, when I stepped into the ghost role, and communication style that confronts (previously occupied by the protagonist in his challenge of all foreigners), the protagonist switched roles and began to reflect, (more Buddhist and typically Thai style). This switch in roles allowed a deeper understanding on both sides, relieved the previous polarisation and tense atmosphere, and allowed a temporary resolution to occur. While on the Consensus Reality or structural level the activist is Thai and I am a foreigner, on the dreaming level both these ways of being are in both of us.

### Group Process

The participant stopped for a moment, looked at me straight in the eyes and said that it would not and others agreed. The atmosphere in the room relaxed, and in that moment, it felt as if the role of the indigenous elder was present. In that moment we were both on the same side, each knowing that, although the injustice of the globalised socio-economic, structural violence, still needs to be addressed, and that the marginalisation of the local indigenous elders needs to stop, along with indiscriminate veneration of foreign teachers, simply banning all foreign teachers was also not the answer.

### Group Process Analysis

It was clear that this was a multi dimensional process that would not be solved only by addressing the CR level. In that moment the roles were no longer polarised by our ethnicity and cultural identification, but were much more fluid. There was a sense shared between us and in the group that we all have all those roles and voices within us, such as the coloniser, the victim, the elder, and tyrant and many others.

It became clear that the anger, hurt and pain that was expressed in the beginning of the group process towards all things western was not just a consensus reality level issue, but the result of many previous and current, personal and cultural experiences that influenced the participants' perception. It became clear that these also needed to be addressed as part of finding a resolution as they were present in the field.

As I facilitated the group process<sup>225</sup>, many of the different polarities were addressed, and a temporary and yet deeply felt sense resolution was reached. It became clear that if on a consensus reality level, only local elders were brought in as teaching sources, and all European methods were banned, this would not necessarily fix the lack of self-esteem and self-confidence which the main protagonist realised he experienced in relationship to the so called external teachers, and that although on a consensus reality level there are roles of European teachers, on the dreaming level all those roles are also within ourselves. However, in this case, and many similar cases all over the world, whenever we experience ourselves in a marginalised, or minority position the consequent backlash, despair, sense of injustice, lack of self confidence in the background can be overpowering. In this case we see this, and when the main protagonist in the Group Process finally had access to the elder within , and the broader perspective that arose with that access, it was relieving, not only to him, but to all others in the field. After this he became much more engaged in the workshop and did some very powerful work on his own inner critics, realising that while it's important to take a stance in the world, it is equally important to work on internalised oppression.

#### Intervention from the facilitator

After the group process I framed what had happened in the process, gave space for those who had not yet spoken to speak if they wished and then led an integration inner-work where all participants had the opportunity to reflect on something that had happened in the group process that still disturbed them and to focus on this internally being as specific as possible. They were then invited to become, or shape shift<sup>226</sup> into that disturbance, find a hand movement or gesture which would express this, amplify it, and then find how in some way the essence, or a small percentage of this could be useful to them in some way.

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<sup>225</sup> For more information on theory and structure of a group process see Chapter Three

<sup>226</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

## In Conclusion

*Those who want to change society must understand the inner dimensions of change.*<sup>227</sup>

*Sulak Sivaraksa, 2009*

I return to this quote by way of conclusion to illustrate a central link between Mindell's work and the socially engaged Buddhist network, that work on the inner and outer dimensions are needed to effect change at a deep level. In all three techniques and examples above (interview, inner work, and group process), it is clear that awareness of inner perspective and the willingness to become aware of one's perspective was central. The main tools that the Processwork model provided to facilitate these changes in group participants' perspectives were: The three dimensions of reality, channels of communication, edges and hot spots, unintentional or double signal awareness and awareness of subtle signals along with awareness of the dynamics of rank, power and privilege, eldership, meta-skills, the concept of the field and structural roles analysis.

For these participants the tools from this Processwork model broadened their capacity for leadership, their facilitation skills and organisational capacity. The emphasis on the inner development of the facilitator along with the importance of accessing the quality and perspective of eldership is central to the increased capacity mentioned above. This emphasis shifted the quality of their presence, or meta-skill, informing all the roles they played including leadership. In the case study above we can see that this is likely to facilitate a longer term, more sustainable outcome than simply reacting to the presenting disturbance, e.g. the foreign facilitator.

Experiencing the multi-dimensional and multi-layered nature of conflicts in this case study has shown the relevance of knowing which dimension needs to be addressed in the intervention, ie CR, DL and essence level. Internalized oppression and lack of self-confidence operates mainly in the dreaming level and as we can see in the group process engaging only in the consensus reality level (e.g. elimination of foreign facilitators) does not address this

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<sup>227</sup> (Sivaraksa, Sulak 2009, p89)



level. Often only the CR dimension is taken into consideration, leading to cycling conflict, which does not reach a felt sense of resolution and consequently often does not last.

Awareness of the dynamics of rank, power and privilege were central to Processwork intervention, and can be seen in the signals and unintentional signals, (i.e. tone of voice, body gesture), in the interactions between the different roles and voices in the field. Knowledge of the wider context and historical influences relevant to the field of the Group Process can be very helpful in terms of understanding the background rank dynamics and probable cultural edges or belief systems at play. However, even without this prior information, these dynamics can be perceived in the signals present. For example, the protagonist initially paced up and down outside and displayed signals of 'lower contextual rank'. He apparently did not feel free to speak up in the group.

Later in the Group Process when he initially spoke out— this could be seen as a type of unconscious revenge<sup>228</sup>. Central roles i.e. the facilitator, or representative of the central viewpoint, (i.e. we are here to learn about Processwork) are usually unaware of their rank. As a result, they often marginalize, disrespect or oppress, marginal roles, which are potentially a threat to the central roles. Consequently the 'lower rank' position, who does not quite feel comfortable with the central position, may suddenly speak forcibly giving the central roles an experience of what it felt like to be on the margin. This was my experience momentarily, when suddenly—from being the lead facilitator, I felt under threat of being thrown out and the balance of power shifted. This is an example of a hot spot, which can be seen as a doorway to another dimension or a deeper level of experience for a group. Knowing this was helpful and enabled me not to experience it as a personal attack and instead to facilitate the interaction between the different voices in the field.

Inner work is central in both Buddhist culture and Processwork, therefore it can also be a bridge between these two frameworks or worldviews. Processwork is an awareness practice, as is Buddhist practice. The main Processwork contribution which has been highlighted in the interview with (N), the inner work of the facilitator and the ability to self reflect of the main protagonist in the GP, is the willingness and ability to put into practice

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<sup>228</sup> For more information on rank, revenge, marginalization and role switch see Chapter Three

the insights from inner work in the moment. i.e. to identify the disturbance, to stand in the shoes of the 'other', and find at least 1% of something useful, or identify where this quality is also within you. This de-escalates the field, as the polarity ceases to be as strong, and can lead to a shift in atmosphere, and a felt sense of temporary resolution.

### **Overall Conclusions (Siam)**

The Processwork paradigm allows us to formulate a structural level that is behind the phenomenological level. (i.e. presenting issues). Although structuralism can be found in other methodologies, what appears to be unique about Processwork is that it perceives the structure in the background from a multi-dimensional perspective, including the more tangible, measurable aspects of the field as well as the non-measurable or subtle levels. The paradigm allows the system to process all the tensions that are present.

## Case Study 4: Global Ecovillage Network

Ecovillages are urban or rural communities of people who strive to integrate a supportive social environment with a low-impact way of life. To achieve this, they integrate various aspects of ecological design, permaculture, ecological building, green production, alternative energy, community building practices, and much more.<sup>229</sup>

### Background

The intention behind ecovillages is to explore and demonstrate models for sustainable human settlements that address the increasing disintegration of supportive social structures and the dramatically increasing destructive environmental practices prevalent on our planet today.



For thousands of years, people have lived in communities close to nature and with supportive social structures. Many of these communities, or *ecovillages*, exist to this day and are struggling for survival. Ecovillages are now being created intentionally all over the world, inspired by our current human challenge to live sustainably and by people being called to find a way of living that better supports a deeper connection with themselves, with each other in community, and with the web of life.

As the planet today experiences limits to growth, ecovillages provide one possible solution. An increasing number of scientists emphasize the need to lighten our footprint<sup>230</sup> if we are to live within the limits of Earth's ecosystems<sup>231</sup>.

In 2000 the United Nations launched its Global Environment Outlook report, based on reports from UN agencies, 850 individuals, and over 30 environmental institutes. It concluded that "the present course is unsustainable and postponing action is no longer an

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<sup>229</sup> (Global EcoVillage Network, 2014)

<sup>230</sup>, (Institute for the Study of Earth, Oceans and Space, 2009)

<sup>231</sup> To frame what the limits of Earth's ecosystems refers to, (Rockström, Johan, 2009)

option”<sup>232</sup>. The report supports the UN sustainability agenda for the 21st century (Agenda 21). In 1998, ecovillages were first officially named among the United Nations’ top 100 listing of Best Practices as models of sustainable living.

### **About The Global Ecovillage Network**

The Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) is a growing network of sustainable communities and initiatives that bridge different cultures, countries, and continents. GEN serves as an umbrella organization for ecovillages, transition town initiatives, intentional communities, and ecologically minded individuals worldwide.<sup>233</sup>

This network has grown to include ecovillage projects all over the world, each with its own regional identity and leadership. The network includes large projects like Sarvodaya (2,000 active sustainable villages in Sri Lanka); Auroville in India, smaller rural projects like Lakabe, Spain, and Huehucoyotl, Mexico; urban rejuvenation projects like Los Angeles Ecovillage and Christiana in Copenhagen; permaculture design sites such as Crystal Waters, Australia; Barus, Brazil; Wongsanit Ashram in Thailand; and educational centres such as Findhorn in Scotland, Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales, Earthlands in Massachusetts and many more. As these networks expand nationally, ecovillage identities have evolved to now include GEN Europe, GEN Oceania & Asia, in America, CASA (South American Network) and ENA (North American Network), and Global Ecovillage Network Africa.

### **Case Study Context**

Processwork was first introduced at the Findhorn ecovillage in 1999 when Max Schupbach ran a workshop there. Subsequently, other senior Processwork teachers, including Jan Dworkin, Robert King, Leslie Mones and Reini Hauser ran training programmes and workshops there regularly over a ten-year period. During this time I and several other community members were very impressed at how effective this approach was in facilitating complex community dynamics and have further embedded this methodology in the Findhorn internal training and supervision programmes as well as in many of our external educational programmes. Some of the Processwork terminology such as the edge, dynamics

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<sup>232</sup> (United Nations Environment Programme, 2014)

<sup>233</sup> (Global EcoVillage Network, 2014)

of rank and power and group process theory including the concepts of roles and the three dimensions of reality continue to be terms that are used in the community training and group dynamics contexts. In this sense Processwork has influenced a degree of cultural change over the years.

For example, in the past there was at times significant tension between the trustees and management groups. Group process has been an invaluable structure that has allowed issues to be dealt with, not only at the structural level of the presenting issues, i.e. budget, long term investment, staff conditions etc., but also on the relationship level between the different members of the group. It offered a structure and language which brought awareness to the mixed signals of communication and high and low rank in the background, which often provoked reactions which made decision making impossible in an atmosphere of tension, resentment and upset. Unpacking the atmosphere in the background with the group process structure allowed the underlying issues to come to the surface and be completed. Additionally, it supported the team to connect with the underlying energetic blueprint, the concept of system mind or self-organising principle, a mythical impulse, or purpose which, existed prior to the community taking physical form and connected them with the deeper dreaming process that had originally drawn them to the project. Eileen Caddy, one of the founders of the Findhorn centre spoke regularly about ‘tapping into the universal mind’ which I understand to be the same thing. She would say that if we all could just tap into the universal mind, we would all know what was needed and that there would be no conflict.

*You Can Draw From the Very Source*

*Realize that within you, you have All Power, All Intelligence, All Wisdom,  
All Understanding; that you can draw from the very source of Universal  
Mind, Universal Consciousness.*

*Eileen Caddy<sup>234</sup>*

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<sup>234</sup> (Caddy, Eileen, 2007)

In this case study I will illustrate the influence that Processwork has had in the Global Ecovillage Network with an in depth study with the coordinator of the Global Ecovillage Network and her experience facilitating the dynamics between the different stakeholders in this network. This case highlights the holographic nature of the process from a systemic perspective and how it is possible to understand and create a structural analysis based on group process theory. I will look at the most disturbing position/ aspect of this imminent group process and study this with the protagonist, making it visible and facilitating her to interact with it. This method, as in the other case studies illustrates how this process can relieve the field and lead to deeper understanding and temporary resolution.

### **Global Ecovillage Network coordinator interview and other data**

This is a case study focusing on experiences of the GEN coordinator and was carried out a few weeks before the Rio+20 United Nations Conference in Sustainable Development. She was to be a participant in the conference and the NGO network gathering that was happening as a parallel to that event in Brazil.

### **Background**

The person in question attended a workshop with me where she did a piece of work focusing on imminent challenges that she anticipated dealing with in her role as network coordinator for the Global Ecovillage Network, specifically highlighting the tension and power dynamics, resentment, anger, frustration and so on between the Latin American ecovillage network groups, the African ecovillage network groups and the perceived or actual dominance and power of the North American and European ecovillage network which has access to funding. One of the presenting issues was that The European and North American groups tend to have more readily available access to funds than the South American and the African networks and there can be a perceived expectation that the latter networks somehow have to prove themselves in order to qualify for the possible funding opportunities which are available.

In Mindell's model of *three dimensions of reality*, from a systemic point of view this directly reflects the north south divide which the conference itself has been designed to address in relationship to natural resources, distribution of wealth, distribution of water, jobs, energy and essentially power and control dynamics across the planet. It highlights the existence of

a parallel process between the event itself, which is examining the global situation and the same dynamics which are simultaneously playing out in the relationships between different organisations taking part. All those concerned are actually working together for a more sustainable world, and yet those dynamics when unconscious can really undermine the effectiveness of working together and collaboration which is desperately needed at this time. These create an atmosphere, tension or *information float*<sup>235</sup>, which Mindell describes as “*neglected, partially completed ideas, feelings and opinions which are not part of the identified communication network*”.<sup>236</sup> This type of experience is often known colloquially as ‘the elephant in the room’. Everyone feels it, it is experienced differently depending on your relationship to it, and is often marginalized and unaddressed, leading to difficult communication and often lack of satisfying resolution. This in turn leads to *double signals*, where the part of the communication that we are most identified with says one thing, and the part that is marginalized or less known communicates a different or incongruent message which can often be perceived in /through body language, tone of voice or a body sensation. A process orientated facilitator would highlight the incongruence and try to facilitate the marginalized or lesser known part of communication so that it can be included in the dialogue. This often is relieving for the atmosphere and can lead to a temporary resolution.

### **Working steps and interview**

*During the exercise we carried out steps which then led to deeper investigation through an interview.* The following paragraphs will be articulated by the steps, showing extracts from the interview and pieces of analysis. The first step involved the participant choosing an organization, project and team that she is involved with that she would like to develop, describing the vision she has for it and some of the related complications. Based on this question she identified the vision that all the GEN networks would work together and in doing so contribute to a more sustainable world.

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<sup>235</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

<sup>236</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 1989 p149)

The second step was to discover what might be against this vision, either within the protagonist herself, and/or possible culturally held belief systems, which might be against collaboration for some reason or another.

Through the gossip, you often hear or discover what is less identified with or more secondary in the field. In Processwork we often refer to this sense of a disturbance or something that goes against the stated vision or intention of an organization, or individual, as a *ghost role*. Ghost roles can often be felt in the atmosphere, or heard about in gossip, indirect comment or references to third parties.

As she began to reflect on how she felt, what she started to describe was anger, incredible anger and resentment, seething resentment and anger which is felt by southern networks towards the north and she also recognized the presence of the complicated history between North and South. She recognized that this situation was another example of colonization and top down administration and that the southern networks hate the fact that they have to prove themselves to essentially white colonizers. They feel in a very passionate way and also want to rebel against what they perceive to be an extremely cold, controlling structural presence of the north. In fact, the situation appears to be very much a direct reflection of global dynamics. When I worked with this person, we started to study her process as the coordinator in situations involving this dynamic.

Q. Gill Emslie

A. Ecovillage Coordinator

Q. So what happens to you when you're sitting with these people, when you think about it?

A. I feel really afraid. First of all I get really tense. I start to want to defend myself. I can feel their anger. I want to push it away and I close myself. Then of course we can become even less related. So here I am sitting feeling in that moment cold and structural and demanding a particular communication style and they are sitting on the other side getting angrier and angrier saying we refuse to comply with your requirements to communicate in your style.



### Analysis

In working with this person, in accordance with Processwork theory, I make the assumption that as she is part of the system in her current psychological, physical and emotional state, that her meta-skills<sup>237</sup> are what are going to make the difference between effective and non-effective facilitation. If she is afraid and therefore defended and unable to communicate her experience to the other side, it will be hard to facilitate effectively and sessions are unlikely to be productive and fruitful. During a moment in a session I said:

Q. OK let's focus on your experience. Let's imagine that as you are also part of this system, you probably also dreamt up<sup>238</sup> to feel inside yourself the different parts of the system and different parts of the field. Let's really focus on your experience and see how we can learn from that and how that might contribute to facilitating the relationship between the north and south in the moment.

She closed her eyes for a moment and started to focus inside. I invited her to make a hand movement or create a posture, which would express the closed-ness, and as she got in touch consciously with this quality, she got in touch with a *defensiveness*, and then her body posture became more stiff. And she began to clench her fist and she said:

A. Actually, I start to feel really angry when I do this.

### Analysis

I encouraged her to further unfold this experience, to feel into the anger, stiffness and clenched fist and to use her awareness to notice in detail her experience and to amplify it in the same channel. In this case her experience was proprioceptive initially (body feeling), as illustrated by the stiffness and initial clenched fist. When I asked her to amplify this experience or feel it more, she became stiffer and her fist clenched more. When I put my hand against the fist she pushed back slightly, but I could feel an incredible power in it. It felt very different from the more primary identity of the person in that moment who was feeling more anxious of the confrontation she would need to facilitate. Processwork assumes that there is important information held within in this type of experience, which if

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<sup>237</sup> (See Glossary of Terms)

<sup>238</sup> (Ibid.)

unfolded with awareness will contribute information about her own response to the situation, and also about the different roles that she has to facilitate. The meta-skill needed to address the challenge is found in the essence of the disturbance.

Q. Go ahead, really let yourself feel that...

A. I feel.. Suddenly I feel the anger that I've felt in my life when I've been abused in the past myself and the absolute anger and..just total anger against that abusive power. And I have my own history where that's happened also, and I can see how I am also afraid. Part of what makes me afraid in the moment of the anger on the other side is my own experience, the abusive experience in the past, that that might happen again. So then I put up boundaries, but actually as I really let myself get into that proprioceptive experience what I find is my own anger. And I can really identify with what it feels like on the other side".[making a fist with her left hand]

Then she went on to say:

A. And I noticed that if I stop being angry, I have this feeling that I will die. I have this really strong experience of on the one hand feeling really angry, really powerful and really angry, and I feel like if I let go of the anger I'm just going to give up. I'm going to die.

### Analysis

This is an example of the holographic nature of this process. In Processwork terms we could say that she was *dreamt up*, to experience and consequently understand the experience of the 'disturbance'

A. And in between, it feels like in between the anger and the part that's just going to give up and die is just this dark place.

So, I said to her:

Q. OK, well let's imagine that the essence of both of those experiences is really needed right now, and let's see if we can find a way to really access what the meaning, what the inspirational meaning of both sides of that experience is, and perhaps there is a way to bring it together. But let's go into them deeply to start with.

So we can observe that she first experienced and went deeper into the anger side and she noticed unexpectedly that the anger was actually on her left hand side, on the side that she normally identifies as being more feminine, more soft. She noticed that suddenly this part was setting a boundary. She focused on feeling the anger more fully and said:

A. I feel grounded, really strong, really powerful.

I could see her posture change significantly as she stood up taller. She looked present and then I said:

Q. OK, let's go into the other side, the part that wants to give up, or might die, and perhaps make a hand movement or something.

As she focused on embracing the experience of dying, of letting go, she said:

A. I feel like when I go in there I start

She started to cry, and shared afterwards that she had had a deep feeling of sorrow and deep mourning. These feelings seemed to express the grief of her own experience, of all the children that are dying in the world, of the hundreds of years of oppression of the current terrible things that are happening on the planet. Moreover, as she started get in touch with the grief, she said:

A. I also start to soften, my heart opens, and I understand that behind anger is that incredible grief. These people that I'm meeting, that I'm trying to facilitate and trying to coordinate and connect up with, have this unbelievable grief in the background and this incredible anger and frustration about it all. And I also see that in myself and then I get hard, when I'm not in touch with those deeper experiences.

Then I said:

Q. OK, let's now get in touch with seeing if we can bring them both together, the feeling of the grief and the softness and the heart opening that happens when you connect with that side and also the power that underlies the anger.

Gently unfolding her experience of one side in the movement channel, she deepened into a felt sense of softening and as she went more deeply into the essence of this she began to

experience a felt sense of connection to loss throughout eternity, generations of loss on all levels, our species, how we hurt each other as a human race. This became a deep proprioceptive experience where her breathing deepened, her eyes were closed and she was feeling a deep empathy with this experience. Then, stepping out of that experience to inhabit “the other side”, she began to access the energy of the fight, recalling the fist, and stepping back into the stiffness, amplifying this experience again, just enough to reconnect with its essence, and she felt a sense of strength, with the energy of the warrior that has the courage to really stand for what they truly believe in, and who in the face of the most dire circumstances doesn’t waiver. The next step was to bring together those two experiences. With one hand she connected with the first experience of loss and a felt sense of that, and with the other the essence of the strength. As she felt into one and then other and began to bring them together this led her to experience a deeply compassionate, strong connected place within herself. This quality emerged from the integration of the essence of both parts of her experience.

Then I said to her:

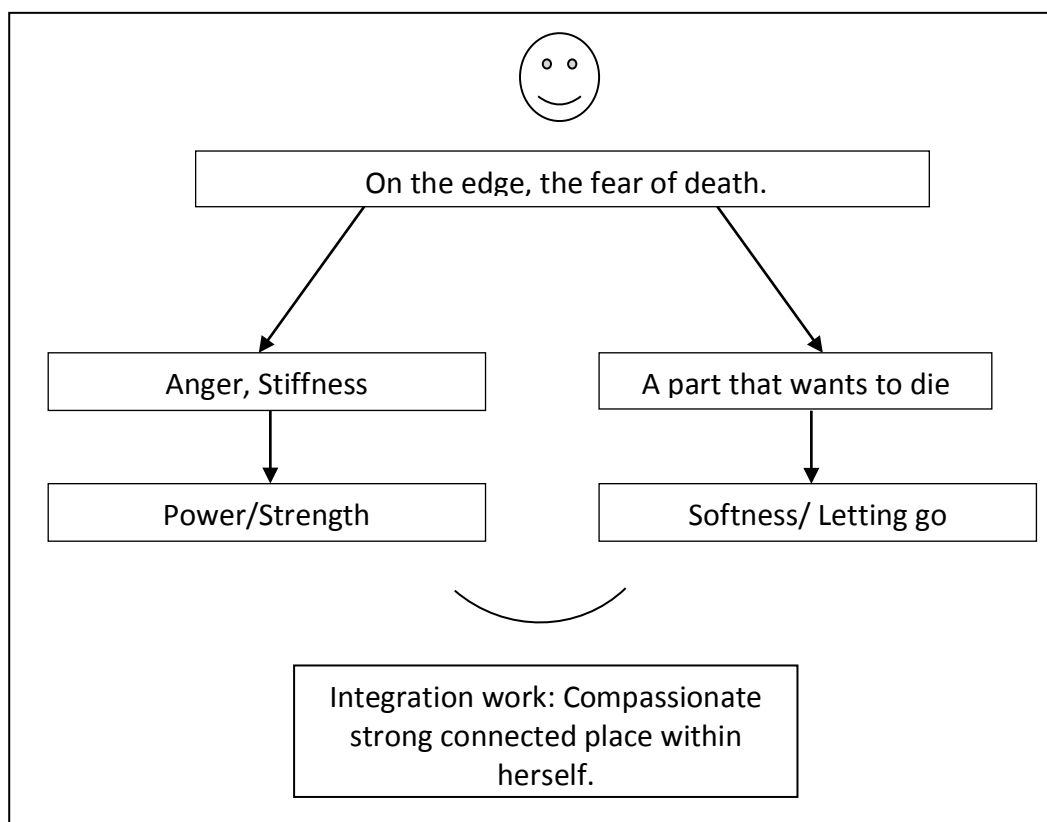
Q. OK, how do you imagine, how might this quality or meta-skill might be useful, how might this experience, and felt sense of understanding change the way that you sit with these networks, these angry Latin Americans or whatever else.

A. Well, I would share my own personal experience. I feel completely different. I no longer feel the need to defend myself and to stand only for the northern authority, the traditionally white dominant role. I can also put myself on their side. I’ve been there too. I understand what it feels like, even if I’m white, on some level I’ve also suffered, I care and that’s why I’m here and what’s more important than anything is to find a way to work together. How shall we do it? Rather than me coming in with my ideas.

We can see here that through the participant’s ability to focus on her inner experience, she was able to understand on a deep level the multi levelled experience of the challenging situation that she was faced with.

The willingness to reflect on her internal experience through initially following her proprioceptive experience allowed her to find both polarities and the tension between them

within. This led to a deeper understanding of the experience on both sides, which enabled her to be less unconsciously sided with one position or the other and to be able to facilitate an interaction between them.



**Figure 28: A snap shot of a momentary process within the participant described above.**

This demonstrates the universal meta-skill of eldership and illustrates that in the essence of the disturbance is the meta-skill that is needed to facilitate that disturbance. This is similar to the principle found in the homeopathy<sup>239</sup> practise of *treating like with like*. The participant was no longer unconsciously identified with the need to protect her initial feelings of threat, but was able to empathise with both sides and to see her reaction as information about the field of which she is in a leadership position, enabling more internal fluidity, and consequently an enhanced ability to metacommunicate or frame the parts of her experience. With the communication style she subsequently embodied based on this deeper connection to the situation, she was more able to facilitate an interaction between

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<sup>239</sup> (Society of Homeopaths, 2014)

the different parts of herself that she had experienced at the beginning of the exercise and she found the useful essence and synergy of both parts. This experience then contributed to a de-escalation of the inner conflict she was experiencing, and later allowed her to facilitate the meeting between the different actors in a way that invited all the voices to be heard, acknowledged the diversity in the group and supported the emerging synergy. This led to improved relationships and a strengthened network. It was also helpful to her to realise that some of her reactions to the situation were influenced by her personal or cultural history.

It also clearly shows how identifying the disturbance and facilitating the interaction between the different parts of the field allows all the information in the field to become known and consequently transform the atmosphere.

The participant later shared in a short interview how this inner work experience had been helpful in another challenging situation that she had to deal with in her leadership role. The following text is a short extract from this interview, which highlights her learning and shift in attitude and facilitation style.

A: It's been so helpful and erm.. and especially you know because a lot of people put you in a role. And to understand that happening I've found specifically difficult you know, it's like when others put you in a role..., they see something in you. And to be loose around that, like flexible and fluid around that and understand that it's happening... and understand also that of course I will have this role for them. So being very compassionate around that..

Gill: So not to take it personally or..

Q: Not to take it personally, to be very compassionate around it and hold gentleness around it. I actually I just had a situation now with a beautiful young woman in Columbia who grew up in the slums and basically all her friends from her youth have died now, you know, they all got into the drugs and violence circle and she got out of that and went to study and is currently working on the PR strategy of the GEN networks of south America.

And then there was this thing about the website and she got really pissed off with GEN and she thought GEN was being impossible, and I was you know, and I didn't respond to the emails.. and I just could hold the space because I really understand where she comes from and that she would in a situation like that, react much more strongly than we would expect

in a Western situation, you know... because it was misunderstandings and her language was very strong and very aggressive, but to really even that.. calling it aggressive.. it was very alive.. it was very alive language.. and I could see her being so alive.. and love her in it and not feel attacked by it.. you know... because I feel that part inside myself that's been in those difficult dark places and I know how it feels and I know that you're distrustful when a guy comes up to you again suddenly, of course you're distrustful, and then when you're distrustful you flare up, you know, so it's very helpful.

Q: Great, thank you.

## Conclusions

This case study has the particularity of being addressed mainly by working with an individual facilitator's experience.

This research highlights the contribution that a Processwork approach can make with this type of innerwork, which supports the participant to closely track their inner experience through unfolding it in the relevant channels of communication. This case shows clearly how valuable an increased awareness of our inner experience and how to facilitate that is for those in leadership and those interested in facilitating or participating in social change processes. The world is filled with polarised situations, which often escalate when those in leadership roles do not take much or any time to reflect on the underlying roles and experiences informing the presenting phenomenon. For leadership to evolve into eldership, from a deep democracy perspective the ability to facilitate the interaction between all the roles is needed.

In his book *Leader as Martial Artist*<sup>240</sup>, Mindell points out that as tribal life is disappearing, the eldership role from those traditions needs to be picked up by everyone—the role of the one who cares for the wellbeing of the whole and everything within it.

*Our tribal leaders combined spiritual and mundane characteristics. Now that tribal life is dying out, a new eldership role will arise that must be shared by everyone. We need to search within and outside for these*

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<sup>240</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 1992)

*elders and support anyone we find who models the principles of deep democracy. Part of our global work is to love this wise part of ourselves. Our next leaders will be not only those charismatic few who are courageous enough to stand up in public but also those who quietly model the eldership role at home.*<sup>241</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 1992*

This case study also clearly illustrates how Processwork identifies the structural level behind the presenting phenomena. In the last example above of the Colombian activist and communication over the website, the participant does not react or further polarise the field, but rather facilitates from an eldership perspective understanding the challenges on the other side, and re-framing anger as aliveness. It also highlights the relevance of Processwork applications in a cross cultural setting. The double signals, or unintentional signals being communicated by the Colombian activist, and unfolding the participants' own unintentional signals in the first inner work, show that at least in these cases, the cultural differences did not seem to make any difference in unfolding the lesser known or more secondary signals. One can also see in this case, that to identify the behaviour or element of a situation that disturbs one the most, to amplify this, notice internalised belief systems that are against the disturbing behaviour, and then to step into the disturbance, *shapeshift*, and explore the essence of the experience until one finds something useful, was transformative.

To conclude, this case study demonstrates how using Processwork to facilitate proprioceptive awareness for facilitators and participants is central to understanding all the information in the field. It clearly shows how Processwork methods can enable facilitators to:

- understand they are not separate from the group or presenting issues
- that they are also part of the field
- that their experience is also information about the field and information about how to proceed with effectively resolving the conflict.

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<sup>241</sup> (ibid, p 156)



Eldership clearly emerges from this type of inner work, when one realises that at the deepest level we are part of the field and that the field is part of us. When compassion arises for all roles and voices and we find elements of those experiences in ourselves the concept of 'other', starts to fade. While on a consensus reality level, certain behaviours may not be morally or ethically acceptable, at the dreaming and essence levels all the tendencies in the field can be found within ourselves. This changes our perspective and approach to facilitation as we have seen in the case study above.

*We cannot go on fooling ourselves into thinking that the world can be run by politicians and leaders who are not elders. The only sustainable solutions to problems are ones containing at least as much love and human understanding as law and order.*<sup>242</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 1992*

Processwork and its multi-dimensional framework of deep democracy provides a perspective and set of tools that facilitate long term changes in the facilitators perspective, shifting this to a multi-dimensional perspective that can facilitate all the information with the system. If all the information in the system is not discovered, and social change initiatives are based on only partial awareness, it is very likely the resulting design solution will be superficial to lesser or greater extent and effective for a shorter time than desired. If some of the hidden background structures have not been acknowledged or even discovered, initially there may appear to be progress, however it is highly likely that with time the society or group or individuals will be drawn to rearranging themselves around the same old background structures. For this reason to create long term social, economic and ecological sustainability, it is extremely important that facilitators of social change have the capacity of perceiving and acting upon a multi-dimensional perspective and supporting all those involved to gain this awareness and skill.

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<sup>242</sup> (ibid, p 157)

## Chapter Six: Overall Case Study Conclusions

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This chapter compares observations and feedback gleaned from all the case studies and describes outcomes grouped in relation to the four aims. It reflects on the similarity of many findings despite the widely differing cultural and social settings in which the case studies were carried out. The chapter specifically examines the contribution of innerwork and the braided methodology of deep democracy with its Processwork tools in facilitating increased awareness of all those involved in social change processes, and any potential contribution in creating wider societal and global perceptual shift.

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*Community is the unit of change. The only way we get through difficult times is together.*<sup>243</sup>

*Margaret Wheatley*

Having written conclusions and insights within the individual case studies themselves, I would now like to look at the case study conclusions together in relationship to the stated aims and objectives described at the end of Chapter One on page 30.

Throughout the case studies I have placed a particular focus on examining the process of facilitating awareness of what prevents us from perceiving our experience from a whole systems perspective and how to shift this perspective when the empirical evidence pointing to this as the context for life is so clear. Evidence from the case studies and my previous professional experience suggest that this is an unconscious marginalisation process, which filters out certain perceptions and focuses on others.

In all the case studies this unconscious marginalisation process often seemed to be informed by history or conditioned and habitual patterns of thought. It was clear that many participants were strongly influenced by the *zeitgeist* or spirit of their times. It was common among participants to have an unconscious habit of perceiving their lives and the world

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<sup>243</sup> Commonly attributed to Margaret Wheatly

from a fragmented, short-term perspective tending to marginalise information that conflicts with what is primarily identified with.

One of the reasons to base the research on case studies from very different cultural and socio-economic settings was to ascertain whether Processwork is an effective tool when applied in varied settings. In this concluding section, I outline my observations on differences and similarities that arose.

To recap, the central aim of this research and the purpose of carrying out the case studies was to consider how Processwork, (described in Chapter Three), within the multi-dimensional structure of deep democracy with its braided methodology, can contribute to the perceptual shift needed to move from a worldview and consequent actions based on fragmentation to one that recognises the inherent interconnection and wholeness.

This aim was divided into four subsections. Findings will be structured in relation to these four areas, illustrated by examples that were presented in the case studies and discussed within the context of theoretical framework in Chapters Two and Three.

Given the interconnected nature of the Processwork approach, each of the four areas contains some findings, which are closely related to findings in other areas.

**Aim 1: To examine the belief systems that inform participants thinking and design processes.**

In all the case studies, Processwork methods helped me to identify limiting belief systems in the form of inner critics, personal and cultural belief systems, ghost roles and timespirits that, when present with no awareness, influenced the individual's or group's ability to respond effectively. With facilitation, often these unconscious limiting patterns of behaviour began to change.

For example, this can be seen in the Bolivian case study (see page 132) when after facilitation Victor models a quiet authority previously only observable in those connected with the multi-national corporation. In the Global Ecovillage Network case study (see page 218) the main interviewee became aware of the belief systems that informed her initial defensive response, and the feeling that she had to *save face* initially which stopped her identifying with the anger, fear and sadness that she was experiencing in response to the

situation. Once she had gained this awareness she was able to more clearly understand where all these elements were also present in the diverse group system that she was about to facilitate. In both cases, gaining awareness then changed the way that these participants subsequently acted.

The definition of design of Daniel Wahl and David Orr, suggests that the belief systems, or lenses through which we perceive, inform the way we design our organisations, our workshops and our relationships. This concept was borne out in all the case studies, in participants, their organizations and within the facilitator herself.

It is clear in all the case studies that when the participants became aware of unconscious limiting belief systems or habitual patterns of behaviour, they were able to respond from a place of increased eldership, which enabled new patterns of response that allowed them to better facilitate the presenting challenges. The opportunity to engage directly with limiting belief systems helped participants gain access to all of the roles in the field and discover new options for how to respond. By working with their inner critics and exploring timespirits, historical influences, collective belief systems and being invited to explore *disturbing* patterns of behaviour that are often found in *others*, participants were better able to notice their own power, despite momentary dynamics of rank and power. For example, after working on himself, in the Bolivian case, Victor suddenly shifted from a submissive and moody participant to speaking from an empowered, clear and articulate perspective. He momentarily occupied the role which had previously been occupied by the other side.

In conclusion, the design of training programmes that are interested in drawing out the full potential of the participants and the organisation would benefit from the inclusion of Processwork and other participatory approaches that acknowledge the inherent wisdom within each participant as well as the organisational myth.

Examples of the influence of belief systems on design processes by participants or the facilitator can be seen in each of the case studies. With the Bolivian coffee producers, once the facilitator had gained an awareness of the need for support for self-esteem, it was clear that, in order for the producers to succeed with their venture, the trainings and support they would most benefit from would ideally contain edge work and awareness training. It

was not even necessary to work with their personal psychology but to facilitate moments where they learned to notice when they were *dreamt up* by the field to occupy the role of the one who cannot stand for themselves congruently. From a systemic and Processwork perspective, this is a role in the field and should be framed as such.

From the Zaragoza case study (see page 165) it could also be deduced from the feedback of the participants that useful components to include in future mediation training would be **self-confidence building** (particularly focused on addressing the inner conflicts that the participants experienced between differing points of view in relationship to the situation they were faced with, their clients, their colleagues and the system as a whole). Also beneficial would be helping participants develop an awareness of underlying belief systems, both internal and systemic, and process structure including understanding of role theory and in particular access to a meta-position that would allow them to perceive all the roles, ghost roles, rank dynamics and time spirits in the atmosphere.

From my experiences in the case studies and previous professional experience, I conclude that it is important for Processwork practitioners to be aware of the presence of fear, aversion, hesitation, lack of self-confidence and other belief systems around conflict when considering the design of conflict management and resolution processes for organizations. For instance, in the Zaragoza case study, participants showed a variety of beliefs around conflict that were subsequently conditioning their processes of mediation and problem-solving approaches and actually hindering them in starting to practice what they had learned.

As evidenced in the case studies, I conclude that the ability to observe with awareness of the belief systems through which we perceive is central to how we behave and how we design at all scales. Observation of double signals is an important source of information in every case: a source of information, which, when unfolded, brought more awareness to the presenting and background field of experience. I observed this perceptual shift and consequent change in behaviour in all the case studies, and concluded that it does not appear to differ according to cultural context.

## Cultural Differences in Facilitation

While unintentional signals of communication were present in all case studies, the meta-skills required for facilitating the awareness process differed according to the primary style of the culture. Culture in this context means both regional culture and the culture of the particular group itself: indigenous Bolivian coffee producers have a somewhat different primary style, influenced by their personal and collective history, than the group of lawyers from Zaragoza. The Spanish group was used to a learning style that involved sitting in a classroom and listening to theoretical presentations. They initially found working with movement and body feeling very challenging whereas those who were less formally educated often responded readily to experiential exercises that involved role play, for example, often responding with negative feedback to lengthy theoretical presentations.

The meta-skills and even dress code required to build a rapport with one group varied. While at a dreaming level the roles, ghost roles, inner critics and so on were present in all groups, the learning style differed from group to group, influenced also by previous experience of awareness based practices. The Thai group for example (see page 182) was largely Buddhist and many had previous experience of practising Vipassana meditation in depth. This prior experience made it easy for them to access the sentient level, cultivate the observer or access a broader perspective from an earth spot or their processmind perspective. On the other hand, initially, as a facilitator it took me a while to get used to the subtle nature of the unintentional signals. The social norms in Thai society are such that disrespect to our elders (anyone older than you) is so unacceptable that often even some of the most hurtful behaviour does not get challenged overtly. There is a particular code of *politeness*, which governs the primary communication style. However, I found that addressing this directly by framing it and discussing it in the multi-dimensional framework of deep democracy and exploring the link between double signals, rank dynamics and revenge was very helpful in facilitating awareness. Once this edge to directly challenging elders was out in the open, we were able to address it directly and found ways to work on the challenging dynamics that arose without needing to betray any cultural values. This was done by working with roles, timespirits and behaviours that triggered edge behaviour.

In line with my experience, in his book *Quantum Mind*, Mindell emphasizes the importance of the qualities of the observer as the facilitator function or role in the system that oversees what is happening. This observation is very relevant to a facilitator or designer seeking to facilitate complex situations.

*In working with couples or larger groups, the facilitator herself is a role in the field, the part overseeing what is happening. The facilitator is a “dreaming eye”, the eye of the field itself. From the perspective of this eye, everything we notice, including ourselves, is part of the dream we are unfolding. If you, or another, does not fill this facilitator role, relationship work and group work feel like a pot of stew without a cook.*<sup>244</sup>

Arnold Mindell, 2000

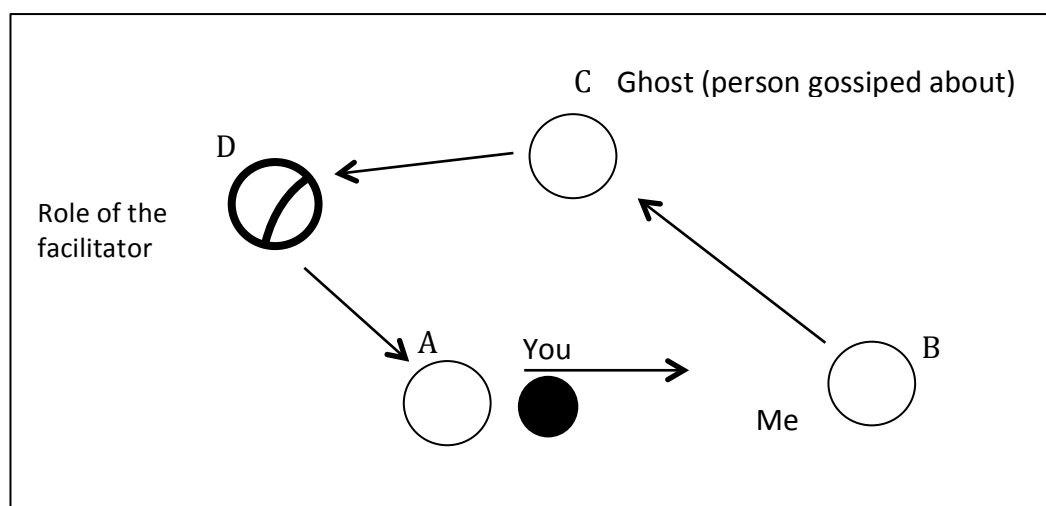


Figure 29: Four Roles within the facilitator.<sup>245</sup>

This concept is coherent with other whole systems approaches. For example, in *Leadership and the New Science*, Margaret J. Wheatley reiterates the need for awareness from a systemic perspective. She emphasises that for a living system to thrive, all the information and diversity within the system is needed. She speaks also of life, even group or organisational life, as a continuous process, rather than a static or stable structure. For many of us, the prospect of change can be threatening to our

<sup>244</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2000, p550)

<sup>245</sup> (ibid, p551)

belief systems and thinking patterns, which perhaps leads to the tendency towards either a command and control response or towards being commanded and controlled or open to the tendency to swing between the two polar opposites; as can be seen in the multi-national, coffee producers and Ecovillage case studies.

*All life uses information to organise itself into form. A living being is not a stable structure, but a continuous process of organizing information... For a system to remain alive for the universe to keep growing, information must be continually generated. If there is nothing new, or if the information merely confirms what already is, then the result will be death. Closed systems wind down and decay, victims of the second law of thermodynamics<sup>246</sup> ...*

*Information can serve such an organisational function because organisations are open systems and responsive to the same self-organising dynamics as all other life. To foster these self-organising capacities in our organisations, we have to work with information the same way that life does..... No other species seems to suffer from the delusion that they can manage information. Instead, they stay alert to what's happening all the time. It seems ironic that even the simplest forms of life often seem more self-aware than we humans do.<sup>247</sup>*

*Margaret Wheatley, 2006*

Staying alert to what is happening all the time is what Mindell would describe as tracking the process from moment to moment, training the observer to using first, second and third attention to notice intentional and unintentional signals and flickering signals that convey information in the system. Using this technique it is much more likely a facilitator or participant will discover unconscious belief systems or thinking patterns and become aware of the historical influences and timespirits that might otherwise lead to the unconscious marginalisation of certain perspectives, hindering them from facilitating a felt sense of temporary resolution or leading to the creation of a less effective intervention. The youth

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<sup>246</sup> (Wheatley, Margaret J, 2009, p118)

<sup>247</sup> (Ibid p120)



activist behaviour in the Thai case study is a particularly clear example of this, as his communication style was incongruent with the context of his accusation.

To summarize, the following key conclusions have emerged in relationship to Aim 1:

### **Aim 1: Belief Systems and Process Design**

*To examine the belief systems that form our thinking and design processes.*

- Processwork methods support gaining awareness of both the belief systems and multi-dimensional map through which we perceive reality, which subsequently influences our perception.
- A living being is not a stable structure but a continuous process of self-organising information. For a system to stay resilient and continue to evolve and co-design participatory processes, new and diverse inputs are essential. A process tool, which does not address the belief systems and thinking patterns in a situation is unlikely to succeed in creating a co-creative, participatory social or physical design.
- Finding *patterns over the edge* that provide models for accessing more of our full potential, or ways of being that we admire, but do not normally identify with are helpful in building self-confidence and inner resources. This is also a way to activate new neural pathways and open up patterns of behaviour.
- Processwork facilitation was effective in identifying unconscious marginalisation of aspects of the field which can lead to a closed belief system and which will ultimately shut down the possibility for effective communication, growth and change.
- The ability of the facilitator to occupy a meta-position, or observer role, is essential to uncover the belief systems and thinking patterns present and to have access to all the information in the system.
- Interventions at the meta-design, mind-set or worldview level, from a multi-dimensional perspective, maximize the leverage point within the system. This creates a higher level of awareness to facilitate the shift in perspective needed in the design of social change processes that aspire to sustainable community at their heart.

- Tracking the process from moment to moment, training the observer to use first, second and third attention to notice intentional and unintentional signals and flickering signals that convey information in the system is central to bringing awareness to all the information in the field.
- The meta-skills of the facilitator are central to facilitating the process.
- Awareness of the learning styles of participants according to their cultural background and the culture of their group, based on their feedback in the moment, is essential if the facilitator is not to unconsciously marginalise aspects of their group.
- Awareness of positive and negative feedback is essential to facilitating a process that invites all the voices and embraces the diversity present.

## **Aim 2: Deep Democracy and Social Change**

*To examine the importance of deep democracy and Processwork methods in the facilitation of Social Change, in particular the role of women and other groups marginalised by historical influences, time-spirits, ghost roles and personal and collective belief systems.*

Processwork provides a multi-dimensional map and language that supports the process of meta-design, upstream interventions and the consequent design of trainings and facilitation processes that encourage participants to see the larger, complex context that they are operating in, as well as the details and momentary interactions from moment to moment.

*Each group process is linked to changes both in the immediate community and in the entire environment. In a way, the process of any given group does not belong only to a group, culture, or environment alone, but it is an aspect of the world field. In a group process, not just your group, but the planet Earth and theoretically the entire universe are involved with all the stars, galaxies solar systems and even other potential universes in real and imaginary space-time.*<sup>248</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 2000*

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<sup>248</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2000 p559)

When we look at the undeniable evidence presented by Raworth and others in Chapter One and Two, describing the complex factors which contribute to the current trajectory of humankind and the planet, which is clearly unsustainable in the long term, and unjust in short term, one might ask how can this be changed? The belief systems and lenses through which we perceive our world do not include a long term, interconnected perspective. As David Orr said:

*The problem is simply how a species pleased to call itself Homo sapiens fits on a planet with a biosphere. This is a design problem and requires a design philosophy... The very idea that we need to build a sustainable civilization needs to be invented or rediscovered, then widely disseminated, and put into practice quickly.*<sup>249</sup>

*David Orr, 2002*

In my experience, and shown in the case studies, Processwork can contribute to the shift in perspective required to build a more sustainable civilization with its multidimensional, signal based lens and its capacity to broaden perspective and increase awareness at the worldview<sup>250</sup> level. This indicates that Processwork is a meta-design tool that can be very helpful to all those working with complex systems, including facilitators and designers.

From my own experience in the case studies, and according to Raworth and others, *resilience* is an important design feature for long-term sustainable change. This refers to resilience not just in the sense of a biosphere that is resilient to the increasing patterns of change in the environment, but to human beings who are also able to cope with change in increasing or unexpected ways. In some parts of the world, such as parts of Bangladesh, and the Philippines we already see climate change mitigation programmes that facilitate climate leadership programmes for those directly affected.<sup>251</sup> These type of programmes need to include not only alternative rice growing strategies, flood and hurricane protection and other topics, but also how to deal with sudden change, trauma and skills to build inner resilience. I have found that here too, the ability to develop a meta-position, or observer,

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<sup>249</sup> (Orr, David, 2002 p50)

<sup>250</sup> A worldview is a view of life, conscious or unconscious, held by an individual, group or culture.

<sup>251</sup> (Cifal Scotland, 2014)

that can bring awareness to the diverse parts of the experience and facilitate the interaction between them will support more resilient communities in these times of change. Many people have the inherent ability to do exactly this, and just need support to connect with it fully.

*Resilience understood as the capacity of a system to continually change and adapt yet remain within critical thresholds. [...] Sometimes change is gradual and things move forward in roughly continuous and predictable ways. At other times, change is sudden, disorganizing and turbulent reflected in climate impacts, earth system science challenges and vulnerable regions. Evidence points to a situation where periods of such abrupt change are likely to increase in frequency and magnitude. This challenges the adaptive capacity of societies<sup>252</sup>.*

*Brian Walker, 2013*

In all the case studies I could see the challenge to adaptive capacity and the ability to face uncertainty of the individuals and societies where I conducted my research. I found that the historical influences, timespirits and consequent belief systems and patterns of behaviour such as colonisation, global corporate culture, sexism, racism and the direct and indirect effects of climate change among others influenced the individual and collective ability to respond effectively. (The dynamics of rank, power and privilege are also clearly central to this discussion and conclusions linked to this can be found in the conclusions in aim 4 of this Chapter).

In all cases *patterns over the edge*, new patterns of behaviour, and in fact a New Story or Myth, to support the Social Change, both inner and outer was needed. In the GEN case, the main interviewee shifted perspective when she became aware of the inner and outer diversity she was about to facilitate and the deep experiences that informed the presenting issues. In the SE Asian case study, the participant who initially was against foreign teachers needed to *cross the edge* (personal and cultural), to being direct about this, and then to *cross another edge* to see that the coloniser, or the quality of the one who dominates, was also in his communication style. In the Zaragoza case study, the belief systems (personal and

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<sup>252</sup> (Walker, Brian, 2007)

collective), initially influenced the lawyers' view of the presenting issue, and led to their analysis of the problem as there being too many migrant women. When analysed further the systemic roots of migration linked to climate change, global economic injustice, racism, sexism, and the inability of their legal system at that time to deal with the increased demands became clear. Increased awareness from a systemic perspective, including willingness to see themselves, their responses and meta-skills as an influence in the situation, and increased understanding and awareness of the belief systems that influences their cultural context, supported several of the participants to inhabit their roles as mediators and as lawyers more effectively.

One of the main reasons that fuelled many of the participants' choice to attend the training courses was a search for tools that could facilitate the complex situations they found themselves facing and, in some cases, a frustration with existing approaches that resulted in a sense of lack of meaningful outcomes. Deep democracy provides a framework that addresses the need for new patterns of behaviour, not only at the dreaming level of roles and polarisations, communication signals and dynamics of rank and power, but also at the less tangible dimension of reality where the system mind, or kind of organising intelligence, self-organising principle, energetic blue print or myth arises. This more subtle dimension assumes a unified field, where organisations and functions are, as if it were, called into being by the need in the greater field to realise its full potential. For example, in the Findhorn community, the *angel* of Findhorn is often used as a way to describe the resonant field of wider work of personal and planetary transformation that the community identifies with. Alternatively, you could say that the worker owned coffee producing cooperatives, or NGO's that support them, are called into the field to balance the multi-national corporations.

When an activity, individual or collective is not connected to this deeper dimension from which meaning is often derived this can contribute to a sense of missing the point, not really making a difference and other similar feelings. This phenomenon is often found when there are no patterns for what that might look like, or a lack of vision that takes into account our planetary context. In the case studies Processwork often helped to identify a vision, or felt sense of a meaningful direction, in context with the desires and social and environmental surrounding of the participants.

Thomas Berry in *The Dream of the Earth* speaks to the Mythic or collective dimension in his quote:

*For people, generally their story of the universe and the human role in the universe is their primary source of intelligibility and value. The deepest crisis experienced by any society are those moments of change when the story becomes inadequate for meeting the survival demands of a present situation.*<sup>253</sup>

Thomas Berry, 2014

Earlier in this research are many quotes that point to the inadequacy of the story and current human role to meet our current demands for survival. Yet, in spite of the empirical evidence to the contrary we see in every case study examples of people who, in spite of challenging inner and outer situations, continue to seek ways to function more effectively in a way that supports wellbeing and change, seeking to find a new story that is more sustainable. Perhaps this capacity is built into our makeup at the deepest level. It would seem that we have an inherent resilience, which is why I conclude that Processwork, and other participatory approaches, some of which I outlined in Chapter two, which address this existential level, are so important. The deepest sense of congruence, or empowerment, seems to emerge when human beings connect to the sense of that vastness and perspective, which emerges with the realisation that humans are part of an interconnected whole. Eileen Caddy, a founder of the Findhorn Community framed this doorway to the connection with something beyond the *self* as the experience of unconditional love. Mindell calls this the Processmind, Stephen Hawking and Paul Davies refer to the *intelligent force* that Einstein referred to as the *mind of God*<sup>254</sup>, and C.J. Jung and other depth psychologists spoke of the “collective unconscious”, the “transpersonal self”, and Joanna Macy refers to those who held this perspective as the *wise ones*.

Evidence of the importance of this intangible dimension of reality in terms of capacity to adapt to change in a resilient manner can be seen in the case studies such as when Victor, in the Bolivian case, derives strength from tapping into his ancestral wisdom and

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<sup>253</sup> (Berry, Thomas, 2014)

<sup>254</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2010 p 4)

understanding of the land. In Zaragoza, participants highlighted gaining awareness of the interconnectedness of life and deriving a greater sense of trust, confidence, security, starting to see conflict as a positive living thing, and gaining greater respect towards others from this meta-perspective. In Thailand, this can be seen when the participant reflects on a situation where he had over powered a student using his rank and position, and then reflects on a time when he was a young monk, sitting on the hill overlooking the valley as the sun rose and meditating there. He felt deeply connected to his deepest sense of self, expanded, and simultaneously connected to the earth and the heavens above. Accessing the felt sense of this time brought awareness to the situation, what had triggered his response and how he might deal with it differently the next time.

Throughout the case studies, I observed participants *having a hunch* or sense of what was needed to improve a situation. I often noticed the tendency to ignore this *sixth sense* and connection to a broader perspective or insight as the rational mind justified why it was important to not challenge the status quo. Processwork brings awareness to this dynamic, often affirming a felt sense of new patterns of thought and behaviour much needed in developing the resilience needed to adapt to change and uncertainty. How to cope with change and uncertainty and develop resilience and adaptability are key components to designing effective social change trainings and social change itself.

What makes complete sense on a Consensus reality level, i.e. the choice of certain career, or relationship, might not make any sense at all from the deeper, felt sense levels of our experience from which we often derive meaning and purpose. Often participants were caught between two tendencies, feeling paralysed by indecision or uncertainty. A deeply democratic perspective assumes that the essence of both experiences is needed. As seen in the GEN case study, the interviewee took time to experience first the essence of part of the experience and then the other. What was needed for resolution in that situation was not one, or the other, but the essence of both.

Other authors in the whole systems field also address the importance of examining uncertainty. Joanna Macy in her work on the Great Turning, described in Chapter Two, spoke of living with uncertainty as an opportunity, calling our full potential forth in a recent training programme she led at Findhorn in 2013, and in her lecture series.

*.. it is that knife edge of uncertainty where we come alive to our choice power.... we honour ourselves to live with sufficient realism and dignity to know that we are right at that knife edge, There are no guarantees.. but then we realise that there are no guarantees anyway—There are no guarantees when you fall in love that you are going to have a lasting relationship, there are no guarantees when you go into labour that you are going to have a healthy delivery, a healthy baby. There are no guarantees when you put seeds in the soil that there will be sufficient rain and warmth for a bumper crop, there never has been guarantee for human life. It is in that exquisite wind and fire of uncertainty that is the nature of life. All the wise ones tell us that. That is where we come alive.*<sup>255</sup>

*Joanna Macy, 2013*

Mindell speaks about uncertainty in relationship to the multi-dimensional map of reality.

*For it is relativity that characterizes our personal world,our organisations, the very universe. On the one hand, we have visions we cannot prove but which make life worthwhile. On the other hand, we live in a concrete world of clocks and meter sticks*<sup>256</sup>

He goes on to say:

*Uncertainty is painful; it is sometimes even connected to depression and anxiety. Using only the rational mind can make you feel dis-orientated, even abandoned at some elementary level.. To the contrary, the deepest and irrational mind doesn't doubt, it simply is, and that is-ness is a sense of connection to the whole of the universe.....Uncertainty inspires some to pray and others to dream and connect to something more inclusive and relativistic.*<sup>257</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 2007*

Deep democracy highlights the need to connect with this non-rational, Processmind perspective, but equally emphasises the importance of awareness at the dreaming and consensus reality levels. So, while it is seems essential that long term social change be

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<sup>255</sup> (Macy, Joanna, 2007)

<sup>256</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2007 p80)

<sup>257</sup> (ibid p82)



embedded in the larger perspective described above, the skills to work with the polarisations and double signals that arise on the dreaming level, and social justice issues at a consensus reality level continue to be of equal importance. One supports the other.

In Consensus Reality, after identifying new patterns of behaviour through various activities including role-play, becoming aware of their inner critics and playing out the historical ghost roles, women in the Bolivian case study in El Alto went on to identify and discuss how some of these changes could be incorporated into the cooperative and family settings. These women also supported other women to form women's commissions to lobby for legislative change, and build networks of solidarity and pathways to link up nationally and internationally with other women.

Betty Friedan, author of *The Feminine Mystique* illustrates the importance of valuing multiple perspectives for women and their role in various areas of society.

*I mean to make it quite clear this is not a bedroom war, that man is not the enemy, that marriage is not the enemy, that [motherhood] is not the enemy. But, that what is the enemy is in effect the structure of society which imprisons women in obsolete roles and denies them opportunities, challenges, and experiences in society that would enable them to grow to their full human potential.*<sup>258</sup>

*Betty Frieden, 1977*

In Bolivia within the contexts where I worked there seemed to be very few examples of other programmes that addressed the underlying belief systems influencing the thinking, feelings and consequent behaviour of the participants. This was a perspective shared by the participants. The more traditional approach to training in these sectors addressed more the presenting phenomena, as in the Bolivian case study when our organisers framed the presenting issue as the apathy and non-cooperation of the participants, rather than seeing this behaviour as a symptom of a multi-dimensional complex situation. In many of the

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<sup>258</sup> (Friedan, Betty, 2013)

programmes I encountered in other international development cooperation training programmes I came across the same issue. Any programme based on participatory processes however, already assumed latent/inherent wisdom in the participants. Working with groups that had previously experienced participatory processes, such as the Grass Roots Leadership training, programmes in SE Asia, I found there was already an openness which supported the participants to explore more deeply and easily the belief systems at the edge of their experiences, and supported them to have an embodied experience of different possible ways of being—to experience the change or a felt sense of ‘new’ patterns of behaviour and to understand that a new story is needed on all levels and that *business as usual* will not address the current situation.

For organisations, Processwork can contribute to the design of an environment where personal and group changes can happen that contribute to Social change. Processwork trainings are spaces of practice where new styles of relationship, behaviours can be practised. Processwork supports social change from a multi-dimensional perspective. For example in the Bolivian case, emerging from the group process, and work on the dynamics of rank and power, was the capacity of the lead participant to speak to the president of the coffee producers association about practical next steps for a cooperative owned producer network. Change of the Law and consequent funding for mediation and restorative justice processes in Aragon, Spain, further supported the emergence of Processwork and other training programmes based on a systemic approach to support the failing legal system. The main GEN interviewee was able to experience the link between inner work and facilitation of the event they were about to lead. In SE Asia, the youth worker in the group process who so vehemently expressed his desire for all foreign teachers and methods to stop intellectually colonising his people and usurping the local elders, realised that even if all the foreign teachers were expelled from the region, the internal coloniser or oppressor and consequent self-esteem/ confidence issues would not change with only an external or consensus reality intervention.

We can begin to see in the above examples that design from a deep democracy perspective shows the importance of valuing experiences in all dimensions of reality.

Other authors like Angeles Arrien and Sulak Sivaraska (in chapter 2) speak about the impact of globalization in this sense, without calling it a timespirit but addressing it as one. Women stepping into leadership in increasingly high profile positions, Barak Obama holding the position of president of the United States and even the increased diversity in the accents of BBC news presenters, are signs of changing timespirits, or *zeitgeist*.<sup>259</sup> Examples seen in the case studies include the intellectual colonisation in Asia, the North/South rank dynamics in GEN case, the multinational colonisation in the Bolivian case, the migration in Zaragoza, as well as climate change and globalisation in every case. Timespirits form a key element in the facilitation of social change as evidenced by what I saw in all the case studies.

I conclude therefore that the more aware one is of the lenses through which we perceive, including the essence that is useful from previously marginalised views, the more diversity will be supported in the system and consequently a more complex design, with emergent properties that we cannot predict.

To summarize, the following key conclusions have emerged in relationship to Aim 2:

### **Aim 2: Deep Democracy and Social Change**

*To examine the belief systems that form our thinking and design processes.*

- The process of any given group does not belong only to a group, culture, or environment alone, but it is an aspect of the world field.
- Awareness of zeitgeists, or timespirits, and the ability to identify and interact with these energies is a major key to effective facilitation of social change.
- Current lack of sustainable trajectory is a design problem and needs a design philosophy. Deep democracy provides a multi-dimensional framework that can frame the situation from a whole system perspective.

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<sup>259</sup> The Zeitgeist (spirit of the age or spirit of the time) The defining spirit or mood of a particular period of history as shown by the ideas and beliefs of the time (<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/>)

- Cultivation of the facilitator or meta-position is needed to support the development of resilience in both individuals and social systems.
- Resilience and the ability to adapt to change are central to long term social change processes. At its heart social change must be embedded in the essence or intangible dimensions of reality.
- *Patterns over the edge* and new stories are needed to support the adaptive capacity of societies in this time of change.
- Facilitation of the inherent emergent wisdom and perspective present in the system is needed to effect deep social change. The multidimensional structure of deep democracy is helpful in framing, and making available all the information in the system.
- Awareness of the need for adaptability, (or fluidity), and the ability to facilitate inner and outer uncertainty and change processes are needed for social change to occur.
- The self-organisation or evolution of social structures and behaviours is needed to support social change processes.

### **Aim 3: Innerwork and Facilitation**

**To illustrate the importance of innerwork, (unfolding the inherent meaning in previously marginalised signals) in the facilitation of culturally diverse situations.**

Processwork as an awareness based practice considers innerwork to be of great importance and relevance. In the case studies it can be seen as a crucial component in developing the ability to unfold the inherent meaning in previously marginalised signals and differentiate our responses, biases, unconscious prejudices, internalised oppression and inner critics, the inner facilitator or meta-position, all of which influence our perspective and the skills and meta-skills with which we may respond to a situation.

*Innerwork* is a relative term, given this unified field approach. Nonetheless, given the multi-dimensional framework, at times we will experience worldwork and the situations we are called to participate in or facilitate as a mixture of subjective and seemingly external or

objective experiences. While objectivity may be a nice idea particularly from the perspective of a facilitator, we know that as soon as a person enters a field of experience, objectivity is no longer possible. *In Quantum Mind*, Mindell describes recent developments in physics:

*The CR observer's state of consciousness disturbs quantum processes. This disturbance is implied by the recent work of Mistral and Sudarshan, which indicates that observation of the decay of an unstable particle, such as a radioactive nucleus, can be suppressed by the act of such observation.*<sup>260</sup>

Arnold Mindell, 2000

Throughout history many mystics, aboriginal peoples and shamans have understood this interconnected, interdependent relationship and influence occurring, as it were, between the observer and the observed. Meister Eckhart, a thirteen-century mystic said:

*The eye with which I see God is the same eye with which god sees me. Realising we are part of the whole universe, not separate, our minds become as clear as crystal and all the Dharma is revealed. So let us see clearly.*<sup>261</sup>

Many traditional cultures have perceived the world from an interconnected perspective. Although this has been lost to a large extent, it seems to remain as tacit knowledge, marginalised by personal and cultural belief systems, but none the less, a deeply felt sense of connection, which is an invaluable source of spiritual and psychological strength. I would say that this was particularly tangible in the Bolivian and Thai case studies.

In all the case studies I found examples where the innerwork of the facilitator or designer was instrumental in bringing additional awareness to the situation. In the SE Asia case study there are several examples, which highlight the value of innerwork. For example, the abbot reflecting on the essence of what is useful in a disturbance finds that the essence of a forbidden sexual impulse was a vibrant, youthful energy much needed in the monastery as it struggles to find its role in the modern world. A deeply democratic approach assumes that

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<sup>260</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2000 p 576)

<sup>261</sup> (Ibid.)

ultimately there is something useful at the heart of every apparent disturbance when it is unfolded with awareness.

In the same workshop the following day as we were selecting the theme for the next group process I had the opportunity to facilitate my own innerwork in front of the group with a young activist who was initially opposed to foreign teachers. Although it felt shocking to both the group and me initially, it was very helpful to bring the core underlying issues to the surface and eventually relieving to the field.

Innerwork facilitates the ability to differentiate the diverse elements of the participants' inner experience. The inner critic mask exercise carried out in Bolivia combines gaining awareness of the inner critics and belief systems that internally oppress the participants, with subsequently developing patterns of behaviour beyond their usual scope, and using these newly found resources to support themselves internally.

In the Zaragoza case study, as we progressed through the training it became clear that a large part of what prevented the existing system from being challenged by lawyers who wanted to incorporate mediation skills, was the internal belief systems or edges of the participants themselves who felt, or believed that it was not possible. As awareness was brought to these limiting belief systems, the lawyers began to feel more confident, and to be able to differentiate between the elements of consensus reality that needed to be taken into account as real life limiting factors in the project, and more subjective experiences such as fear of the unknown and lack of confidence.

*We convince by our presence.*<sup>262</sup>

*Walt Whitman, 1900*

There are many approaches to innerwork, some of which I mention in Chapter Two. However, one of the central features that appear in many of these practices is the ability to detach, or maintain awareness in the midst of confusion or chaos. The term I used in the SE Asia case study to describe my own *deathwalk*, or as Mindell speaks of it as the ability of the

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<sup>262</sup> (Whitman, Walt, 1900 p82)

facilitator to sit in the fire, and the need for a facilitator to have burnt their own wood, are all ways of speaking to the need for innerwork. The more we have identified and explored issues that we find challenging, the less likely we will be to react unconsciously towards the challenge. As we can see in the Bolivian case study for example, the *campesinos* had previously tended to either get angry or walk out of meetings with high-ranking officials. When they accessed their inherent eldership, and a felt sense of birth right, self-confidence and vision they were able to communicate effectively with these same officials from a non-defensive and clear position. This attitude is more likely to create culturally and ecologically sustainable community, than the initial, presenting communication style of apparent apathy, defensiveness or frustration.

In Chapter Two, other authors including Eileen Caddy and Dorothy Mclean of the Findhorn Community, Thomas Berry, an eco-theologian and historian and Sulak Sivaraksa confirm the importance of an interconnected worldview and the relevance of innerwork and reflection on our experience from this perspective.

The role of the facilitator is central if the presenting issue is to be correctly identified. The ability to have a metaview of the different roles or voices in the field, including the ghost roles and timespirits that influence the atmosphere yet that no-one consciously identifies with, is essential for effective facilitation. While, as Mindell described in *Sitting in the Fire*, it might be tempting to simply marginalise voices that are disturbing, we can see that for long term sustainability, resilience and bio-cultural diversity, conditions that support system self-organisation are needed. This is supported by the outcomes of all the case studies. As described by Donella Meadows in her quote in Chapter Two, an example of the recognition of the importance of cultural diversity and a changing time spirit was highlighted in the Resurgence Magazine<sup>263</sup> published in celebration of the UN declaration of Indigenous people's rights where human rights equal to all other human beings were granted, only recently in 2007. Luisa Maffi in her article Cultural Vitality, highlights a shift in the scientific community that now recognizes that.

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<sup>263</sup> (Mandar, Jerry, 2008 p6)

*Bio diversity also includes human cultural diversity, which can be affected by the same drivers as biodiversity, and which has impacts on the diversity of genes, other species, and ecosystems.*<sup>264</sup>

*Luisa Maffi, 2008*

To summarize, the following key conclusions have emerged in relationship to Aim 3:

### **Aim 3: Innerwork and Facilitation**

*To illustrate the importance of innerwork, (unfolding the inherent meaning in previously marginalised signals) in the facilitation of culturally diverse situations.*

- The role of the observer/meta-position has a significant influence on perception.
- Processwork style innerwork can support awareness of patterns over the edge.
- Awareness of inner/outer diversity of roles and ghost roles, signals and double signals, and atmosphere, enables the facilitator to more easily differentiate the presenting issues and the underlying process structure.
- Participants who carried out inner work had more choice in how they decided to respond.
- Eldership is the central meta-skill needed to facilitate diverse situations.
- Processwork suggests that the essence of the disturbance contains the meta-skill we need to address the presenting issue. This principle is applicable across all cultures.
- Innerwork can enhance awareness of the importance of bio-cultural diversity for long term, sustainable and resilient community.
- The role of the facilitator in a system is in all cases bringing awareness into the field. Innerwork by the facilitator is crucial as it enables her to resonate with all sides in a conflict or a polarity, and occupy the meta-position, or facilitator role in the field giving her the overview that is so often missing in any conflicted or polarised situation.

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<sup>264</sup> (Maffi, Luisa, 2008 p10)



- Experiencing the relevance of diversity at a personal level can connect us to the importance of cultural diversity and bio-cultural diversity and vice versa. The design of programmes that include awareness of bio-cultural diversity along with inner diversity, will contribute towards restoring resilience in any society.

Inner diversity and the ability to move between the diverse internal perspectives as they arise and change are central to becoming a resilient facilitator.

#### **Aim 4: Process Structure of Conflict**

**To examine the background structural roles; dynamics of rank, power and privilege and the importance of including double signals, in the facilitation of conflict and diversity issues.**

As discussed earlier in this section, from a living systems perspective, resilient communities, organisations, groups, relationships and individuals, indeed any resilient living system requires maximum diversity. Out of that there may emerge the unexpected, innovation and emergent properties that will be required as a living, interactive, process orientated system of any sort that constantly needs to adapt to on-going changing and uncertain times. If structural roles, dynamics of rank, power and privilege become too inflexible and do not allow for sufficient diversity, some groups will feel disenfranchised. Mindell begins his book *Sitting in the Fire*, by reminding us that, “Behind the World’s most difficult problems are people—groups of people who don’t get along together”.<sup>265</sup>

If we don't permit hostilities a legitimate outlet, they are bound to take illegitimate routes”. We can see across the globe the dynamics of rank, power and privilege playing out. Social justice issues, such as food, water, equity, resilience and suffrage, and in particular, access to food and gender equality are still not available to the majority of the world’s population, and as mentioned in Chapter One and Two, many of these issues could be addressed with a relatively low percentage of the global annual capital expenditure. When this is not done and there is related civil unrest and the energy of these voices starts to pick up momentum, the results are called riots, or crime. Often, the leaders or representatives of these

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<sup>265</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 1995 p11)

‘minority’ groups are threatened or ‘disappear’. Yet, although the person can be silenced the role or voice continues. The role is bigger than the individual.

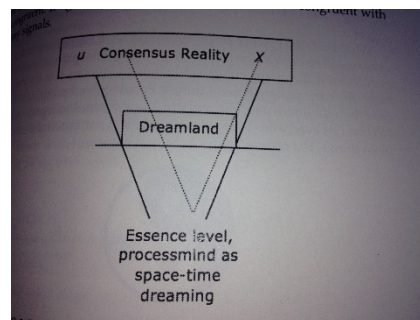
In the SE Asia case study, I describe how one can use the group process structure to create a *roles analysis* of the time spirits, roles, ghost roles and historical influences and how they influence the *field*, and the presenting issues. Simply stated, there is a hidden structure in the background, made up of cultural and personal belief systems, time spirits and ghost roles, which informs and organizes the presenting visible structure or presenting phenomena. We know that it is there by becoming aware of the incongruent signals, local and nonlocal and the atmosphere we experience as facilitators and participants. We can change the visible structure—but as long as we do not work with the hidden structure no real change will happen.

Mindell suggests that awareness, which is brought by clearly seeing the systemic, multi layered context of the situation, can be very helpful in highlighting what interventions are needed and likely to be most effective. A Process orientated facilitator will endeavour to be aware of the field within which they are working, and make a roles analysis, and structural hypothesis prior to, or while facilitating any group.

In all the case studies it is possible to perceive a ‘hidden’ or underlying role structure. When looked at systemically, we can clearly see the influence of the rank dynamics in the Bolivia case, where the “majority” or mainstream view was that the local people were unable to run their own cooperatives, and needed to be taken care of by the large multi-national. On one hand, primarily, many of the farmers had accepted this ‘reality’, for many years, in fact generations. On the other hand, the double signals that did not go along with their submission were apparent. The original ‘apathy’ or mood, the body language, tone of voice, and lack of eye contact, were clear double or unintentional signals that did not go along with their more ‘primary’ agreements.

The initial complaint from the training organiser was that the participants are apathetic and lack energy. In spite of all the resources they have available they seem to not be motivated to engage. Seen from a roles analysis perspective this situation is not unique to this case study. In a supervision session with my advisor Max Schupbach he commented that, *a similar dynamic could be found all over the world wherever there is a role of “we are trying*

to help”, and a complaint that those in receipt of the help are passive. They are not passive—they just don’t like you, because you make them feel stupid and worthless! This reaction from the *campesinos*<sup>266</sup> is not only a reaction to the unconscious high rank signals of those ‘trying to be helpful’, yet who are unfortunately unaware of the patronising style of communication that implies that ‘I am ok, you are the one that has the problems’, rather than seeing the situation as a multi-layered, systemic problem with influences from the past and present. The *campesinos*’ silent strike is a reaction to hundreds of years of serfdom, of being marginalised and put down. What gets marginalised in this situation beyond the presenting conflict, is the inherent intelligence, wisdom, strength and leadership of the *campesinos*.



**Figure 30: u & x<sup>267</sup>**

This is a dynamic that is replicated worldwide between those with the structural rank and power, and the disenfranchised. A similar dynamic occurs between the different voices we have within us. The voice that is dominant or more primary tends to reflect the values of the mainstream culture. The other voices, tendencies and longings are marginalised by the personal and collective belief systems that unconsciously organise our choices, and ways of being.

This struggle and these roles that we see time and time again in the case studies are essentially time spirits that are in conflict with each other on the consensus reality and dreaming level. Mindell suggests that we need the essence of both. The role of the elder, a

<sup>266</sup> Campesino – Spanish term for peasant.

<sup>267</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2013 p243)

compassionate meta-position, is to facilitate the dynamic between these different roles so that they can work it out somehow and find the spirit that expresses the flow between the polarities or the essence of both. This is a way to embrace the diversity in the system, rather than marginalise it, as we saw in the innerwork section when the Abbot discovered that when unfolded with awareness, the essence of his sexual desire was a life giving force that was needed by his community, not only a forbidden physical act.

In the Bolivian gender forums a time spirit that was eventually occupied by one of the senior directors of the NGO that we were collaborating with was that, according to the bible men will always be head of the family. In this case he used a third party (the bible, the sacred book for a part of the world where often the Priest will have more authority than the local officials), to support the established perspective on gender roles, and where until recently, women were, and in many cases still are, considered to be subservient with no rights to land or inheritance and in many cases in rural settings still taken out of school at a very young age. Although women's rights have taken a much more central position, in practice discrimination is still very common. It was helpful to identify the various ghost roles, (that can be felt in the atmosphere), making them explicit, then they could be interacted with by the emerging voice of women who are no longer willing to take second place, and put up with mistreatment and discrimination. While the roles can be identified as gender specific in consensus reality, at a deeper level, all these experiences are shared. For example, it is not only women who experience discrimination. Consequently, as the group process progressed and the different voices in the field began to be heard, both men and women could identify with the different experiences being voiced and a felt sense of deeper understanding began to emerge. All members of the group did not share this understanding, but the polarisation between the initial presenting roles of men, versus women, began to change. This led to productive conversations later in the day where proposals to change some of the stereotypical roles in the producer's cooperative were made.

In the SE Asia case, N, speaks about the signals of unconscious spiritual rank that would infuriate his partner. In Zaragoza we can see that the lawyers, on one hand were keen to develop skills to expand their mediation services, and on the other hand, the time spirits and cultural belief systems were in many ways against change. This required them to not

only train in new skills, but also to be social activists in terms of challenging the existing system to try out new approaches.

In the example from SE Asia where one of the participants initially sat at the back of the class with his hat pulled down over his eyes, and once in a while got up and paced up and down outside, while smoking strong smelling tobacco, we see an example of sending unintentional signals. He was probably unaware of the impact of his presence or mood. The rank dynamics initially organised the communication structure, in his compliance with the identified roles of teacher and student. However, when I introduced group process and invited the participants to name issues that they would like to like to explore, he then forcefully introduced the subject of foreign teacher and methodologies as described in the case study. I conclude that given the primary Thai style of being polite, or indirect, his initial mood, and subsequent forceful communication style, was organised by the field of cultural expectations. These different styles of communication represent polarities in the field, shared by all, and the essence of both is needed. At the essence of the forceful style were an incredible strength, directness, clarity and connection to eldership and wisdom. An indirect, more primary Thai style at its essence is a kind respectful, loving quality. The essence of both is needed for the field.

The examples illustrated in this last section outlined some of the conclusions I arrived at when examining the background structural roles, dynamics of rank, power and privilege and the importance of including unintentional or 'double' signals, in the facilitation of conflict and diversity issues.

To summarize, the following key conclusions have emerged in relationship to Aim 4:

#### **Aim 4: Process Structure of Conflict**

*To examine the background structural roles; dynamics of rank, power and privilege and the importance of including double signals, in the facilitation of conflict and diversity issues.*

- Processwork and the structure of deep democracy, provides a framework, set of tools and language that can facilitate the unfolding of the unintentional signals that indicate the underlying role structure. This allows a deeper level of intervention.

- The underlying role structure organises the visible structure in each case. Facilitation of the unintentional signals along with the presenting issues allows a deeper felt sense of change in perception to occur, contributing to a more sustainable, more deeply felt sense of change.
- Groups, relationships and individuals, indeed any resilient living system require maximum diversity from which there may emerge the unexpected, innovation and emergent properties that will be required as a living, interactive, process orientated system.
- Diversity is the raw material of innovation and is needed for the long- term evolution or self-organising capacity of an organism, or social structure.
- If structural roles, dynamics of rank, power and privilege become too inflexible and do not allow for sufficient diversity some groups will feel disenfranchised, and the ability to be resilient and adaptable will be compromised.
- The dynamics of rank and power influence all of our communication, intentional and unintentional, and can be perceived in the unintentional signals.
- Unintentional signals clearly emerged in all case studies as a key in reading/understanding the background structure of the more visible process and gaining congruence in communication. Designing processes that take into account all the different channels of information, as means of communication is central to perceiving all the information in the field.
- The essence of both of the main polarities in the field is needed, when unfolded with awareness.

## Conclusions

The application of Processwork with its multi-dimensional framework, philosophy of deep democracy and it's braided methodology in the case studies leads me to conclude that its capacity to facilitate increased awareness and provide a language and structure with which to frame a multi-dimensional perspective of reality is essential in the facilitation and understanding of complex group dynamics and processes of social change.

Processwork provides a map and language that addresses the need for new patterns of behaviour, not only at the dreaming level of roles and polarisations, communication signals

and dynamics of rank and power, but also at the less tangible dimension of reality where the system mind, or organising intelligence, self-organising principle, energetic blue print or myth arises.

I also conclude that in spite of the differences in cultural and economic contexts, background structural roles and dynamics of rank, power and privilege exist and have similarities in all cultures. In facilitation of conflict, social change and diversity issues in widely varying cultural and cross-cultural situations, framing the process structure in such a way that brings awareness to the unintentional or 'double' signals of communication often leads to a deeper felt sense of resolution and more effective facilitation.

It supports the process of meta-design, upstream interventions and the consequent design of trainings and facilitation processes that encourage participants to see the larger, complex context that they are operating in, as well as the details and momentary interactions from moment to moment.

So, while it seems essential that long term social change be embedded in the larger perspective described above, the skills to work with the polarisations and double signals that arise on the dreaming level, and social justice issues at a consensus reality level continue to be of equal importance. One supports the other.

The case studies demonstrated that applied Processwork was often an effective tool for facilitating processes which contribute to the perceptual shift needed to move from a worldview and consequent actions based on fragmentation, to one that recognises the inherent interconnection and wholeness across all scales. It is clear to me that central to an effective meta-design perspective is the feeling quality, meta-skill or quality of eldership with which the facilitator or designer observes and makes interventions. This highlights why innerwork forms such a central part of a Processwork approach.

I propose that the multi-dimensional structure of deep democracy with its braided methodology and the meta-skill of *eldership* can support a connection with the deepest part of our selves, bringing awareness to the unconscious marginalisation process, which tends to exclude certain minority viewpoints and identities, both within ourselves and amongst

others, and showing how awareness of these different levels can shift our perspective, or assemblage point—radically altering our relationship with ourselves, each other, and the biosphere we are part of.



## Chapter Seven: So where do we go from here?

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This chapter reflects on the research findings and their relevance in a wider context. It proposes that at a time when many fields and sectors are facing issues of ever increasing diversity and complexity across all scales that many situations require a perceptual shift. With its multi-dimensional lens of deep democracy and braided methodology that facilitates access to all the information in the system, Processwork is considered to be an approach with special relevance in the field of Design and facilitation. Some of the potential weaknesses of the methodology are examined and areas for possible further research are put forward.

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*The plain fact is that the planet does not need more successful people. But it does desperately need more peacemakers, healers, restorers, storytellers, and lovers of every kind. It needs people who live well in their places. It needs people of moral courage willing to join the fight to make the world habitable and humane.*<sup>268</sup>

David Orr, 2005

In this light, it is clear to me that the world needs facilitators and designers who create interventions, places and processes that support a sustainable world where the quality of life, the quality of our relationships and whether or not what we are doing and how we are living is contributing to a legacy we would wish to leave to future generations. Reflecting on this research, and based on many other experiences of facilitating and living and working in community and group settings, there is no question that effective, deep communication is essential to support a resilient adaptive response in this time of rapid change, and can lead to the creation of resilient communities and organisations that strengthen the inner capacities of the individuals and their part in the whole.

Learning to facilitate the complicated process of consensus building with its consequent emphasis on the quality of relationships has been central to my calling in life. I was very

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<sup>268</sup> (Orr, David, 2005)

upset with top down structures where individuals are often instructed on how to act and have little say in how decisions are made and where the norm often continues to maintain the status quo, without any reflection on the underlying, and often unsustainable premises on which actions are based. In this study, we can see that often these cultural norms, held in place by inner and outer critics, ghost roles and time spirits which influence our perception, infuse us with fear or uncertainty, based on the compartmentalised and fragmented worldview which informs most of our education systems, and consequent thought processes.

I was prompted initially by a strong emotional response to the processes of marginalisation and discrimination that I experienced as a young Scottish woman, and later by witnessing at close hand large scale social and environmental justice issues where the long term sustainability of neither human nor environmental life was valued and short term gain was prioritized. The clearly linked cycles of addiction and depression (described in Chapter Two) that arise in situations where marginalization exists, strengthened my intuitive sense that sustainable design interventions are needed across all scales in all sectors. In this increasingly complex world where multi-stakeholder dialogues have become the norm, I found Processwork, with its scientific structure of deep democracy and braided methodology was a useful model to include in the facilitation of conflict.

The results of this application were visible throughout the case studies and conclusions. While carrying out the case studies, I experienced many varying emotions including feeling extremely upset. I acknowledged how upset I felt, but purposely dampened the feeling about these conflicts and underlying issues to allow a clearer and more objective understanding of the scientific structures informing the interventions used. Prior knowledge of field theory and *dreaming up*, also supported me internally in understanding that these feelings were also likely unexpressed feelings in the system that I was working in, and consequently a source of information, hitherto unexpressed.

It is important to understand that in Processwork there is a structure in the background that is a thinking process. The methodology is not just an emotional process. The three strands of the braid comprise, measurable facts (Consensus Reality), the feelings about the facts – often polarised and organised by the dynamics of rank, power and privilege across the

scales (Dreaming Level), and the superposition of these two, where the essence of both when unfolded with awareness, bring together elements of both at a subtle dimension, connecting to the motivational roots, or vision in the background, assuming that all the information or diversity in the system is needed (Essence Level).

One of the strengths of using this *braided* methodology is that it attempts to address and include all aspects and elements present in a system both tangible and intangible and the relationships and connections.

The lens it provides to examine the case studies, facilitates access to all the information in the system, using its multi-channelled, whole systems approach.

The conclusions in Chapter Six suggest that Processwork and its analytical framework of deep democracy and braided methodology are applicable beyond the scope of this research. I have primarily emphasised the relevance of this approach in the context of the facilitation of social change, in a limited selection of situations, and clearly this research is a small-scale study. As the research shows however, the method can be applied in a broad spectrum of contexts. As commented previously, I apply this method in many different contexts, but the braids are always present in any situation. Given the findings of this small-scale study, I would suggest that this methodology could be applied to larger systems and system changes, such as climate change, large and small-scale international development projects, small and large business and community projects and even international conflicts that arise within and between different nation states.

Based on this research and other anecdotal evidence such as the work of colleagues, some of whom are mentioned in Chapter two, from their work in hot spots across the world where diversity issues and conflict have been facilitated and eased by interventions based on a Processwork approach. I suggest that introducing related training programmes, that teach this approach as a method to learn to perceive multi-dimensional perspectives and gather all the information in the system attempting to communicate itself through the diverse voices, would be very useful.

Further research should be done on how closed systems with very rigid rules, such as large corporations, impact long term sustainability and how the braided methodology and its

framework of deep democracy can highlight this and facilitate these institutions to operate with more awareness of sustainability, environmental and cultural health and safety across different scales. Although this study is a small-scale study, anecdotal evidence from other practitioners who work in widely varying fields suggests that there is potential for application at a larger scale. It would be fascinating to see a large study of an entire nation.

Although my research has been the design of interventions in the area of social justice, I believe Processwork has a lot to contribute as a meta-design tool, although clearly this would need more research. Tom Inns in his book, *Designing for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*,<sup>269</sup> speaks of the increasingly complex, multidimensional challenges that are facing designers in the 21st Century and the need for interdisciplinary approaches.

Speaking with Professor Seaton Baxter regarding this theme, he suggested that “if Inns is correct in his speculation on the emergent role of designers, most of these design roles are now at a meta-level and therefore they are likely to be moving into fields such as conflict resolution”. In this case the results of my research with Processwork could be of benefit to those designers moving into interdisciplinary fields. Inns suggests that

*The development of meta-design disciplines that act as a bridge between existing approaches to design....Here we see 21<sup>st</sup> century design being dependent on the evolution of new meta-design disciplines that help navigate between existing discipline silos. Again driven by the need for new design approaches to address 21<sup>st</sup> century issues like sustainability, health and security.*<sup>270</sup>

*Tom Inns, 2007*

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<sup>269</sup> (Inns, Tom, 2007)

<sup>270</sup> (Inns, Tom, 2007 p23)



**Figure 31: Development of meta-design disciplines**

Inns goes on to suggest the future roles of designers as facilitators of thinking and visualizers of the intangibles. The designer needs to take into account the relationships, emotional networks involved, and the complexity of multiple roles that can arise in an interdisciplinary multi-stakeholder world. How to design processes that facilitate increased and effective participation between very diverse participants is likely to become one of the central challenges for designers, particularly for those with sustainability as part of their remit. As the quality of relationships and the flow or processes between the diverse parts of increasingly complex systems is so central to a whole systems approach to design and the facilitation of diversity issues in all contexts, I suggest that the lens of Processwork with its analytical framework of deep democracy and braided methodology can be extremely helpful to the designer as she increasingly endeavours to facilitate sustainable participatory design processes that involve complex systems. This perspective is likely to facilitate a much deeper, felt sense of resolution or agreement. Additionally the ability of the designer to facilitate a participative process with all stakeholders which is connected with the self-organising principle or emergent deeper purpose of the project, and whether the emerging design process has a sense of being *on track*, is likely to provide a deeper felt sense of congruence or alignment with values and a sense of deeper meaning.

The Processwork skills and awareness outlined in the Conclusions section of Chapters Five and Six are, in my opinion, potentially very useful additions to the designer's tool kit, particularly the understanding that the designer or facilitator is part of the system. Clearly more research is needed to determine what Processwork can add to the existing research and development of facilitation design. The ability to occupy a meta-position within the design process and the ability to meta-communicate or frame one's internal and external perceptions with the meta-skill of eldership and its ability to embrace diversity is perhaps at the heart of the success of the sustainable design facilitator. Additionally the understanding of role theory and rank dynamics, process structure, signal awareness and the self-organising tendencies or myth and values that are seeking expression through this design process will be helpful. These skills are central to the ability to simultaneously notice and monitor each of the three dimensions of reality while forming a rigorous, structural analysis of the inter-relationship between the three dimensions and the whole system.

I suggest that this research shows the value that the Processwork lens can contribute in the design and facilitation of sustainable communities or organisations at all scales, honouring, supporting and cooperating with nature's inherent ability to sustain life. As such, it 'qualifies', as a meta-design tool that facilitates Natural Design.

## **Critical Vision of Processwork**

Many of the findings indicate the relevance of Processwork as a method to facilitate social change and sustainable design processes. Nevertheless critical visions of Processwork should also be considered in order to maintain awareness of its position within a wider context and for more effective future applications.

At times I have experienced Processwork facilitation to marginalise consensus reality, and overly focus on the relationship, or sentient dimensions. This is not a weakness in the model *per se*, but I think a tendency that might emerge if the facilitator has a bias against more concrete elements or vice-versa. This again highlights the importance of the facilitator carrying out innerwork on an on-going basis. It is important to remember that processes such as decision-making, organisational structures that reflect the sentient level, and dialogue based on other social technologies can also be effective in facilitating increased awareness, understanding and decision-making.

Processwork has developed an extensive glossary of terms over the years. While this serves to frame lesser known terms and concepts, it can also seem to the ‘outsider’ to be rather an elite process requiring initiation into the language and practice. This can marginalise or discriminate against those not familiar with these terms. Awareness of this issue is critical, particularly for working in culturally diverse settings, and the meta-skills of the facilitator, and their ability to frame clearly in sensory grounded terms, are central to introducing this approach in a way that lands effectively with the participants.

Other methods have also effectively catalysed change, and the valuing of a diversity of approaches is important. As a process worker and as part of this research, I have encountered other ways in which groups, communities and organizations are making changes in their cultural contexts. The Grassroots leadership trainings in South East Asia, mentioned in the Thai case study, are an example of this.

When passionate about a method, such as Processwork, it is easy to be one-sided and see the virtues of it as a panacea, but when looking at the world situation and the richness of its bio-cultural diversity, it is clear that there must also be a great diversity of approaches to social change can be used to allow us all to facilitate healthy communities and environment.

Donella Meadows emphasises that the main leverage point from a systemic perspective is not just to shift paradigms, but to transcend paradigms and to realise that no paradigm has the ultimate answer. Arnold Mindell shares this perspective in his most recent book, *Dance of the Ancient One*, where he also speaks to the need to shift perspective at a meta level.

*This book calls the solution to on-going, complex personal and global issues the Dance of the Ancient One. The solution is not a fixed state: it is a process or a dance. Who is that ancient one? This most ancient one is the universe of course, but it is also you and me! Yes, it is you in your deepest dreams and you near the end of your life! It is you in your 1,000 years. It is you, in a relaxed and open state of mind. The solution to complex global issues is your most detached wisdom: it is you moved, or danced, by the universe.*<sup>271</sup>

*Arnold Mindell, 2013*

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<sup>271</sup> (Mindell, Arnold, 2013)

Thinking of elders of our time, Nelson Mandela (1918—2013) sprang to mind. He served as President of South Africa from 1994 to 1999 and was South Africa's first black chief executive. His government focused on dismantling the apartheid system through tackling institutionalised racism, poverty and inequality.

I close here with an extract from his memorial service speech by Barak Obama that encapsulates some of the qualities that one might seek in cultivating eldership. In many ways, Mandela represents a *pattern over the edge*, or way of being that many people aspire to, and that is needed if we are to facilitate and lead sustainable design processes in the 21 Century.

Finally—Mandela understood the ties that bind the human spirit. There is a word—Ubuntu, a word that captures Mandela's greatest gift. His recognition that we are all bound together in ways that are invisible to the eye. That there is a oneness to humanity, that we achieve ourselves by sharing ourselves with others and caring for those around us. We can never know how much of this sense was innate in him or how much was shaped in a dark and solitary cell. But we remember the gestures, large and small introducing his jailors as honoured guests at his inauguration. Taking a pitch in a Springbox uniform. Turning his family's heart break into a call to confront HIV/Aids. That revealed the depth of his empathy and his understanding. He not only embodies Ubuntu, he taught millions to find that within themselves. It took a man like *Madiba* to free, not just the prisoner, but the jailor as well. To show that you must trust others so that they must trust you. To teach that reconciliation is not a matter of ignoring a cruel past but a means of confronting it, with inclusion, and generosity and truth. He changed laws, but he also changed hearts.

*He speaks to what is best inside us, when this great liberator is laid to rest, and we have returned to our cities and villages..... let us search for his strength for his largeness of spirit within us, when the night grows dark and injustice weighs heavy on our hands, and when our best laid plans seem beyond our reach, lets us think of Madiba and the words that brought him comfort within the four walls of his cell. "It matters not how*



*straight the gait, how charged the punishment, the stroll, I am the master of my fate, I am the captain of my soul” .....<sup>272</sup>*

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<sup>272</sup> (Obama, Barak, 2013)

## Glossary of Terms

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### *Acausal*

Having an unknown or non-causal connection. See *teleology*.

### *Ally or Allies*

Allies appear as dream-figures, spirits, entities, which may be threatening, disturbing or scary but when wrestled with become an aid to personal power. [SG]<sup>273</sup>

### *Altered State*

A state of mind that is not our primary, logical, typical state from which we function (unless we are someone who typically functions from an altered state!). [PROCESSWORKI]<sup>274</sup>

### *Assemblage Point*

A way of describing your identity—the way you see yourself “assembled” together. A transformation process may involve a shifting of your assemblage point, so that you see yourself and/or the world in a different way. [PROCESSWORKI]

### *Attention*

The First Attention (Consensus Reality Awareness) The awareness needed to perceive outer situations and information associated with everyday reality.

Second Attention is the ability to notice, focus on and unfold signals unintentional signals of communication, such as body language or tone of voice, which are not congruent with the intended communication signal, such as the words that are being spoken.

Third attention (Essence Awareness) is the awareness of the Essence level or sentient awareness. This includes the ability to perceive “flirts”—those tiny signals that are not yet manifest but live on the fringe of our awareness. Catching and unfolding “flirts” allows us to enter the essence level. So, awareness In process oriented psychology or process work is a term used to mean fully inhabiting a range of feelings, viewpoints, sensations and

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<sup>273</sup> All terms labelled [SG] (RSPOPUK; Audergon, Jean-Claude, 2014)

<sup>274</sup> All terms labelled [PROCESSWORKI]: (Process Work Institute, 2014)

perspectives and the capacity to do that. It includes noticing differentiation of experience as well as being able to shift one's momentary identity between the different perspectives. It also includes a simultaneous recognition of these shifts and processes. [SG]

### *Awareness*

Awareness refers to the ability to notice consensus reality phenomena (normal vision, sound, speech etc.); symbolic phenomena (also referred to as *dreamland*, which is further described later), archetypes, spirits, and figures; and barely luminal, felt, ineffable, intuitive, or spiritual experience that can not quite yet be articulated in words.

### *Big U*

The Big U is a system-mind concept. U stands for Universe, or the biggest part of a group or of a person. A system can be the whole world, or a group, or an individual, or even a particle. In any and all cases, the Big U connects to the piloting-guiding function of the system's mind (or more exactly, its quantum mind). It is experienced as a kind of dreamlike organizer of the system and includes all of the parts, people, and situations involved. [IAPOP]

### *Biomimetics*

The abstraction of good design from nature

### *Channel*

The way in which we perceive and experience. Includes vision, hearing, movement, proprioception, relationship, and world. [PROCESSWORKI]

### *Conflict (causal)*

Conflict is the product of unmet needs and unrecognized differences and is often the result of feared tensions in plans, goals or actions. [IAPOP]

Conflict (non-causal) From a non-causal perspective, two aspects of the background dreaming are manifesting as polarities so that they may be resolved. [IAPOP]

Consciousness Awareness of awareness, i.e., an ability to be aware that one is aware of phenomenological experience. [IAPOP]

*Consensus reality*

The material level of daily existence which most people generally experience and agree upon most of the time. [IAPOP]

*Deep Democracy*

Deep democracy is a basic concept as well as an elder's multidimensional meta-skill (feeling attitude) towards life which recognizes the basically equal importance of consensus reality issues and concerns (facts, issues, problems, people) dreamland figures (roles, ghosts, directions), and the essence (common ground) that connects everyone. [IAPOP]

*Double Signal*

An unintended signal that sends a message that is incongruous with the intended message. [IAPOP]

*Dream Figure*

A psychological symbol—similar to an archetype in Jungian psychology and to spirits in Shamanism. Used to describe an unconscious force that is affecting an atmosphere or influencing behaviour. [IAPOP]

*Dreaming*

The metaphysical or spiritual experience and meaning behind behaviour, signals, symptoms, and disturbances. [IAPOP]

*Edge*

An edge is the limit of what we can perceive, think, communicate, or believe we can do. Structurally speaking, an edge separates the primary from the secondary process. [IAPOP]

*Edge*

A point of contact between the everyday identity and an unknown, or dreaming, experience. It is the boundary between the primary process (everyday identity) and the secondary process (emergent identity). Edges are also dynamic moments of transition, in which a known way of understanding oneself is disrupted and transformed by something new. A primary process marginalizes certain experiences, thereby creating an edge. Once secondary experiences are brought into everyday awareness, they become primary, rendering other experiences secondary and creating new edges. [PMW p. 126] A

communication block that occurs when an individual or group, out of fear, represses something that is trying to emerge [Leader with Presence 2012]

### *Edge BEHAVIOUR*

A collection of signals that indicates one is close to an edge. These could include giggling, being quiet, signs of embarrassment, resistance, shyness, etc. [PROCESSWORKI]

### *Eldership*

An attitude of support and caring for the well being and diversity of viewpoints of a group or community [PROCESSWORKI]

### *Eldership*

A universal meta-skill; coming from your deepest self and its direction. This skill involves Deep Democracy plus the sense the world is your child -interweaving the sense of the equal importance of individual viewpoints and the grand mystery behind it all. This meta-skill arises from the compassion of the Big U. [IAPOP]

### *Emergent*

A term for the non-consensual, subjective experiences that are also referred to as Dream Land experiences. The term emergent is often easier to explain within organizations, as opposed to the technical jargon of Dream Land. [IAPOP]

### *Entanglement*

A metaphor borrowed from quantum physics meaning the individual or group experience in which parts are connected not only directly, but through magical and nonlocal means. [IAPOP]

### *Field*

An emotional atmosphere or a felt sense of a particular shared consciousness that seems to be transmitted by acausal non-Newtonian means. [IAPOP]

### *Field*

The atmosphere or climate of any community, including its physical, environmental and emotional surroundings. [Leader with Presence 2012]

*Flirts*

We use the word “flirt” in the most general sense of something trying to catch our attention. A flower for example, may “flirt” with us (and vice versa!). The flirt happens so quickly that we usually pass it by or forget it. Yet in communicating, the flirt plays an important role as the predecessor to signals, and potentially difficult communication situations. [IAPOP]

*Fluidity*

Fluidity refers to an ability to notice the one-sidedness of one’s own momentary experience or thought and shift into or support other experiences or thoughts. [IAPOP]

*Framing and levels*

The facilitator can frame a discussion by remarking about the different levels or dimensions people are speaking about. E.g. One person may speak about (consensus reality) issues and outer action while someone else is speaking about feelings (dreamland). Then, someone else might speak about a common ground (essence) that unites us. This clash of levels can be the source of conflict itself! The facilitator can frame things by saying that there are many levels arising simultaneously; one person is talking about outer action while another is speaking about her feelings. Ask which direction to focus on while remembering the others. [IAPOP]

*Ghost Role*

A role in a field which is unoccupied (no one is representing or expressing the role) but which is nonetheless felt to be present. Ghosts are a part of dreamland. They refer to those things that are spoken about but not directly represented by anyone in a given group. Some typical ghosts are ancestors who are spoken about but who are no longer present, the “bad” person who is not in the room, the environment, etc. Getting into, representing, + expressing the views + thoughts of ghosts can be important keys to processes. And it is Important to know that everyone shares these ghost roles. [SG]

*Hot Spots*

An intense moment in which there is a strong emotional clash between individuals or the whole group or when something forbidden or intense happens that causes everyone to become silent or frozen. When hot spots are not focused on, they are the source of future

escalations. Therefore, it is helpful to notice hot spots, to slow down, and go deeper into the feelings of each side of the conflict. Hot spots can be the doorway to deepening the process. [IAPOP]

### *Hunter*

The Hunter learns certain minimal disciplines in order to find and connect with a deeper power. The practice of the hunter is to study processes and to become disciplined in hunting signals and double-signals. [SG]

### *Indigenous*

Being a member of the original inhabitants of a particular place. [IAPOP]

**Inner Figure** An archetype, or an anthropomorphized role or viewpoint, e.g., inner child or inner critic, the one who says I should study vs. the one who says I should phone my lover. [IAPOP]

### *Metacommunicator*

The role, individual, or inner figure who notices what is happening on a deeper than normal level and communicates about it thereby bringing it to awareness. This can happen intra psychically, in relationship, or in groups. [IAPOP]

### *Meta-position*

A standpoint that a person steps into momentarily to help process a conflict by supporting or challenging certain other individuals or standpoints. [IAPOP]

### *Meta-skill*

The feeling attitudes, values, and beliefs that deeply inform our way of working with others. Meta-skills encompass beliefs about life and death, nature, learning, and growth, as well as the feeling with which skills are applied. The feelings with which theory, information, and techniques are applied. (Leader with Presence 2012)

### *Meta-skill*

The skill, technique, or tone a person uses in intervening or when expressing a meta-position. Or, the meta-quality, or feeling behind the use of a skill. Or, the feeling attitude with which theory, information and techniques are applied. The term "meta-skills" implies

that, in addition to noticing these attitudes, we pick them up and use their energy, using our feelings and attitudes in the service of the community, group or person we work with. [SG]

### *Moods*

Moods are like the weather, atmospheric conditions that come upon you. Moods are related to our attachments, personal history and sense of self-importance. (see Phantoms) [SG]

### *Nagual*

The Nagual has various meanings in the books by Carlos Castaneda and his stories about Don Juan.

One definition is that it is the unknowable, that which can be experienced but not described in everyday language. It can appear as threatening or terrifying. This is contrasted with another concept the Tonal which refers to the social constructed reality (see Attention) [SG]

### *Non-Consensus reality*

This is a subjective level of dream-like experience, including body sensations, altered states of consciousness, subtle feelings and imagination. [SG]

### *Non-Locality*

The experience of interconnection or synchronicity, beyond time or space, also the sense of being not only located in your body, but spread out through the universe. [IAPOP]

### *Open Forum*

Structured, person-to-person or cyberspace, deeply democratic meetings, in which everyone feels represented and which includes social issues as well as the deepest feelings and dreams of the participants. The Open Forum method emphasizes the more linear style of worldwork in which the facilitator helps events go more slowly and intervenes more often. [IAPOP]

### *Parallel Worlds*

Each feeling, each vector is a “parallel world” in the sense that it is usually not directly in touch with the world of the other vectors and feelings. This is a central worldwork situation,



One group of people frequently lives in a “parallel world”, relative to other peoples. We live next to one another, but while we stay in Consensus Reality, like parallel lines, might not often meet. [SG]

### *Participant Facilitator*

In WW, the concept of leader and facilitator is understood basically as a shared role. Therefore the old concept of participant changed, we call the new participant or “citizen” a “participant facilitator.” (just as the leader/facilitator is leader-follower etc.) [IAPOP]

### *Personal history*

Stories we construct about who we are that also help construct our idea of reality. This is a familial, cultural and social construction as well as a personal one. [SG]

### *Polarity*

A pair of roles, views or positions, that exists in oppositional relationship to each other. [IAPOP]

### *Pre-emergent*

A non-technical term for sentient experience. The term pre-emergent is often easier to explain within organizations, as opposed to the technical jargon of sentient essence. [IAPOP]

### *Primary Process*

The self-description, methods and culture with which you and your group identify yourselves. “Process” in primary process emphasizes how identity changes in time. [SF] Our common, habitual identity and focus. [IAPOP]

### *Process*

A coherent and meaningful flow of signals and experiences that underlie problematic, painful and creative events. [SG]

**Process Mind** This is the deepest part of ourselves, associated with a part of our body, and the spirit of an earth location. Just as the earth underlies all forms of human and natural activities and weather in the biosphere, the process mind is the dreaming intelligence behind all our experiences. The “PM” is a key all facilitators need to work with all worlds and peoples. [IAPOP]

*Process Work*

A methodology for finding deeper meaning in human experience by following signals.  
[IAPOP]

*Process, Primary*

Connected to our personal identity, our common, habitual identity and focus, reflected in self-description, and the culture with which you, me, and our group identify ourselves. "Process" in primary process emphasizes how identity changes in time. [SG]

*Process, Secondary*

Aspects of ourselves that we, as individuals or groups do not tend or want to identify with. Often we project these aspects onto people we view as "other." We may marginalize or admire these qualities, creating inferior or superior traits in other groups. [SG]

*Process Orientated Facilitation*

The ability to simultaneously notice and monitor each of these three levels while forming a rigorous, structural analysis of the inter-relationship between the three levels and the whole system in the basis of process orientated facilitation and is further described in the next chapter.<sup>275</sup>

*Rank*

A conscious or unconscious, social or personal ability or power arising from culture, community support, personal psychology and/or spiritual power. Whether you earned or inherited your rank, it organises much of your communication behaviour, especially at edges and in hotspots. Leader with Presence 2012

*Rheology*

The science of flow, which in process work is both a science and an art connected to fluidity and movement between levels and parts. [IAPOP]

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<sup>275</sup> (Siver, Stanford, 2008, p 9)

### *Role and Roles*

A viewpoint or function within a field, generally occupied by various people at different times.

The concept of roles belongs to the dreamland aspect of group process. While each role such as boss, underling, patient, or helper seems to be located with a given individual or group, it is actually a timespirit that needs to be filled by many of us. In other words, each role is much greater than any one individual or group. And, each of us is bigger than any one role. In other words, people are not roles. [IAPOP]

### *Role Switching*

There is a natural tendency to role switch. That is, we find that we may identify with a particular role but then at a given point notice that we feel pulled to represent another role, or that we are in another role. For example, someone in a social service organization who is identified as a helper for others who are suffering and in need of care, may begin to speak about her or his own suffering. At that moment, she or he has switched roles into the "others" who need care. Noticing and allowing yourself to switch roles is an awareness practice; sensing when you are in one role and when you begin to move to another. This is another aspect of dreamland in which we share roles. [IAPOP]

### *Second Training*

The first training is about rational, logical information that can be easily expressed verbally and shared with others such as signals, and the content of issues. The 2nd training is about learning to follow ineffable guidance from mythic sources such as the land. [IAPOP]

### *Secondary Process*

The underlying motivator or dream figure behind a group's or individual's disavowed identity. It is a process because it changes with time. The secondary process includes experiences that we do not perceive as belonging to our personal identity. We perceive them either as happening to us or as emotions and experiences that we do not identify with such as anger, fear, power, and spiritual connection. Often we project these aspects onto people we view as the enemy or people who we see as being inherently different than us. We may marginalize or admire these qualities, assuming inferior or superior traits in other groups. [IAPOP]

*Sentient Level*

This refers to the deepest and most subtle level of subjective experience. There are no polarities, only a deeply felt connection with something greater and the basic essence of various experiences. [IAPOP]

*Signal*

An indicator, generally in movement, language, verbal tone, or other nonverbal signal, that carries meaning. (see channels) [SG]

*Stopping the World*

The process of collapsing our worldview and belief systems so that the 'world' as we usually apprehend it no longer has a hold over us and we are able to enter second attention. [SG]

*Synchronicity*

An apparently meaningful coincidence in time of two or more similar or identical events that are causally unrelated. These are combinations of psychological and world or physical experiences. [SG]

*Tao*

The basic, eternal principle of the universe that transcends reality and is the source of being, non-being, and change. The dreaming river, or background process, which is trying to happen. [IAPOP]

*Team Work*

A team is a group of “beasts of burden” (Webster). Teamwork is a team process where everyone knows the team’s Big U. [IAPOP]

*Teleology*

A belief that natural phenomena are determined not only by mechanical causes but by an over-all design or purpose in nature. [IAPOP]

*The Double*

The Double is a mysterious aspect of psychological and spiritual teachings the world over. Simply, it is who you as a whole—who you really are independent of time and space. [SG]

### *Urban Shamanism*

Shamanism as practiced by western mainstream people working with spirits, shape shifting and magic to transform situations and symptoms. A practice—which has roots in Indigenous Shamanism and mysticism—of following seemingly unrelated experiences such as synchronicities, flirts, somatic experience, momentary visual or auditory hallucinations and nature; accepting them as meaningful for understanding the present moment; and using their message to shift one's own awareness and way of intervening. [IAPOP]

### *Vectors*

Arrows. Vectors are the mathematical term for arrows. We use vectors to mean your subjective or dreamlike sense of earth-based direction. The earth pulls or moves you in certain directions at different times. When you walk and follow the direction of vector of any experience, you may feel a sense of energy, power, and rhythm, which may tell you about the meaning of the path. [IAPOP]

### *Warriorship*

A warrior uses the accomplishments they have developed as a hunter to leave everyday reality and enter other world using second attention. The warrior is someone who has the courage to know herself or who faces her own fear. It is a condition of openness to actively daring the truth about oneself and a willingness to be vulnerable in expressing one's own inner experience, feelings, and views. [SG]

### *Worldwork*

Worldwork is a small and large group method that uses Deep Democracy to address the issues of groups and organizations of all kinds. To resolve reality problems and enrich community experience, worldwork methods focus on employing the power of an organization's or city's dreamlike background (e.g., projections, gossip, roles, and creative fantasy). Worldwork facilitators listen to the land, do innerwork, practice outer communication skills involving role consciousness, signal and rank awareness to enrich organizational life. Worldwork has been successfully applied to the analysis of and work with multicultural, multileveled, Aboriginal communities, universities, small and large international organizations, city hot spots, and world conflict zones. Worldwork awareness requires access to the Process mind. [IAPOP]

## Epilogue

Although I have reached a conclusion for the purpose of this study, I can already feel the pull to keep researching, practicing and honing my skills and finding ways to contribute to the field of natural or meta-design and the facilitation of the increasingly complex and diverse situations that we now find ourselves faced with in the 21st Century. Thinking of my daughter Kira, and all the young people of her generation and the future generations world wide, my hope is that this research will contribute in some way to bringing increased awareness to our current dilemma and how this can be addressed from a deeply democratic perspective that engenders the quality of eldership in all of us, embraces the multi-cultural, bio-culturally diverse nature of our world and assumes that all the voices and expressions of life are needed in some way for the full expression of this emergent dynamic living system of which we are all part.

*If we surrendered to earth's intelligence we could rise up rooted, like trees*<sup>276</sup>

*Rainer Maria Rilke, 1996*



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<sup>276</sup> (Rilke, 1996))

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## Appendix

### Appendix 1: Table of Planetary Boundaries

Causal Factors - Human & Naturally occurring elements -	Consequences - Human Impact -
<b>Climate Change</b>	
<p>“Global atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide have increased markedly as a result of human activities since 1750 and now far exceed pre-industrial values determined from ice cores spanning many thousands of years (see Figure SPM.1). The global increases in carbon dioxide concentration are due primarily to fossil fuel use and land use change, while those of methane and nitrous oxide are primarily due to agriculture.”<sup>277</sup></p> <p>“Atmospheric concentrations of CO<sub>2</sub> (379ppm) and CH<sub>4</sub> (1774ppb) in 2005 exceed by far the natural range over the last 650,000 years. Global increases in CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations are due primarily to fossil fuel use, with land-use change providing another significant but smaller contribution. It is <i>very likely</i> that the observed increase in CH<sub>4</sub> concentration is predominantly due to agriculture and fossil fuel use. CH<sub>4</sub> growth rates have declined since the early 1990s, consistent with total emissions (sum of anthropogenic and natural sources) being nearly constant during this period. The increase in N<sub>2</sub>O concentration is primarily due to agriculture.”<sup>278</sup></p>	<p>“During the last 100 years, the global mean surface temperature has increased by about 0.6 Celsius, precipitation patterns have changed spatially and temporally, and global average sea level rose between 0.1 and 0.2 meters. The global mean surface temperature is projected to increase from 1990 to 2100 by 1.4–5.8 Celsius, accompanied by more heat waves. Precipitation patterns are projected to change, with most arid and semiarid areas becoming drier and with an increase in heavy precipitation events, leading to an increased incidence in floods and drought. The MA scenarios project a sea level rise of 9–88 centimeters” (MA, 2005, p-75-76)<sup>279</sup>.</p> <p>“Anthropogenic warming could lead to some impacts that are abrupt or irreversible, depending upon the rate and magnitude of the climate change”.<sup>280</sup></p>
<b>Biodiversity Loss</b>	
<p>“The main causes of species extinction are changing from a historical trend of introductions and overexploitation affecting island species to present-day habitat loss and degradation affecting continental species” (MA, 2005, p.79)<sup>281</sup>.</p> <p>“Climate change, which contributes to habitat change, is becoming the dominant driver,</p>	<p>“We conclude that humanity has already entered deep into a danger zone where undesired system change cannot be excluded, if the current greatly elevated extinction rate (compared with the natural background extinction) is sustained over long periods of time.”<sup>284</sup></p>

<sup>277</sup> (<http://www.unep.org/maweb/en/Framework.aspx>)

<sup>278</sup> [http://www.ipcc.ch/publications\\_and\\_data/ar4/syr/en/spms2.html](http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/ar4/syr/en/spms2.html)

<sup>279</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.272.aspx.pdf>

<sup>280</sup> [http://www.ipcc.ch/publications\\_and\\_data/ar4/syr/en/mains3-4.html](http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/ar4/syr/en/mains3-4.html)

<sup>281</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.273.aspx.pdf>

<p>particularly in vulnerable habitats” (MA, 2005, p.79).<sup>282</sup></p> <p>“Homogenization, the process whereby species assemblages become increasingly dominated by a small number of widespread, human-adapted species, represents further losses in biodiversity that are often missed when only considering changes in absolute numbers of species. The many species that are declining as a result of human activities tend to be replaced by a much smaller number of expanding species that thrive in human altered environments” (MA, 2005, p.79-80)<sup>283</sup>.</p>	<p>“Our own research acknowledged the difficulty of setting a planetary boundary on how far humanity can afford to lose biodiversity before triggering non-linear changes in ecosystem functioning, with flow-on effects for societies, but there is enough evidence to demonstrate the critical role biodiversity plays for ecosystem resilience, i.e., the ability of ecosystems to stay in a desired environmental state”<sup>285</sup>.</p> <p>“Our primary reason for including biological diversity as a planetary boundary is its role in providing ecological functions that support biophysical sub-systems of the Earth, and thus provide the underlying resilience of other planetary boundaries”<sup>286</sup>.</p>
<p><b>Agro-diversity (food and agriculture) situation—(separate from biodiversity to highlight it)</b></p>	
<p>“Genetically modified foods are increasingly receiving attention in the food safety debate with regard to toxicity, allergenicity, stability of the modified genetic composition, nutritional effects associated with genetic modification, and unintended effects as a result of gene insertion (WHO 2005). Outcrossing (the movement of genes from GM plants into conventional crops or related species in the wild), as well as the mixing of crops derived from conventional seeds with those grown using GM crops, may have an indirect effect on food safety and food security if the gene products are toxic. The risk of seed mixing is real, as was shown when traces of a maize type that was only approved for feed use appeared in maize products for human consumption in the United States (WHO 2005).”<sup>287</sup> (MA, 2005, p.236)</p>	<p>“Despite the fact that food production per capita has been increasing globally, major distributional inequalities exist. Global food production has increased by 168% over the past 42 years. The production of cereals has increased by about 130%, but that is now growing more slowly. Nevertheless, an estimated 852 million people were undernourished in 2000–02, up 37 million from the period 1997–99. Of this total, nearly 96% live in developing countries.” (MA, 2005, p.211)<sup>293</sup></p> <p>“In 2007, farmers planted an additional 12.3 million hectares of genetically modified (GM) crops, bringing the total global area up 12 percent to 114.3 million hectares. Genetically modified crops (also called biotech crops) have been intentionally altered through genetic</p>

<sup>284</sup> <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/main.html#Biodiversity>

<sup>282</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.273.aspx.pdf>

<sup>283</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.273.aspx.pdf>

<sup>285</sup> <http://lowres.stockholmresilience.org/research/researchnews/addressingsomekeymisconceptions.5.5d9ea857137d8960d471296.html>

<sup>286</sup> <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/main.html#Biodiversity>

<sup>287</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.277.aspx.pdf>

<p>“Pesticides, especially organic chlorides, are expected to increase in importance as a health concern, particularly in the context of multiple pesticide exposure. Although the long-term effects of pesticide exposure remain uncertain, evidence suggests that toxins may increase carcinogenic and neurotoxic health risks in susceptible sub-groups (Alavanja et al. 2004; Maroni and Fait 1993).” (MA, 2005, p.236).</p> <p>“Government policies are significant drivers of food production and consumption patterns, both locally and globally.” (MA, 2005, p.211)</p> <p>“One of the most important and controversial set of drivers conditioning food provision globally are agricultural production and trade policies, and especially the producer subsidy and tariff protection measures supported, in particular, by the European Union, the United States, and Japan.” (MA, 2005 p.226)</p> <p>“Rising incomes, urbanization, and shifting consumption patterns have increased per capita food consumption in most areas of the world.”<sup>288</sup> (MA, 2005, p.211)</p> <p>“The accelerating demand for livestock products is increasingly being met by intensive (industrial or so-called landless) production systems.”<sup>289</sup> (MA, 2005, p.211)</p> <p>“Per capita consumption of fish is increasing, but this growth is unsustainable with current practices.”<sup>290</sup> (MA, 2005, p.211)</p> <p>“Wild foods are locally important in many developing countries, often bridging the hunger gap created by stresses such as droughts and civil unrest.”<sup>291</sup> (MA, 2005, p.211)</p>	<p>engineering—the elimination, alteration, or introduction of new genetic elements, including from one unrelated species to another”<sup>294</sup></p>
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<sup>293</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.277.aspx.pdf>

<sup>288</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.277.aspx.pdf>

<sup>289</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.277.aspx.pdf>

<sup>290</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.277.aspx.pdf>

<sup>291</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.277.aspx.pdf>

<p>"An increasing number of people everywhere suffer from diseases caused by contaminated food."<sup>292</sup> (MA, 2005, p.211)</p>	
<p><b>Alteration of nutrient's cycles (nitrogen and phosphorus inputs to the land and oceans)</b></p>	
<p>"Production and use of synthetic nitrogen fertilizer, expanded planting of nitrogen fixing crops, and the deposition of nitrogen-containing air pollutants have together created an additional flux of about 200 teragrams a year, only part of which is denitrified."<sup>295</sup></p> <p>"Phosphorus (P) is also accumulating in ecosystems at a rate of 10.5–15.5 teragrams per year, which compares with the preindustrial rate of 1–6teragrams of phosphorus a year, mainly as a result of the use of mined P in agriculture."<sup>296</sup></p> <p>"This tendency is likely to spread and worsen over the next decades, since large amounts of P have accumulated on land and their transport to water systems is slow and difficult to prevent"<sup>297</sup> (MA, 2005, p.333).</p>	<p>"The cycles of several key elements—phosphorus, nitrogen, sulphur, carbon, and possibly iron and silicon—have been substantially altered by human activities over the past two centuries, with important positive and negative consequences for a range of other ecosystem services and for human well-being."<sup>298</sup></p> <p>"The resultant N accumulation on land and in waters has permitted a large increase in food production, but at the cost of increased emissions of greenhouse gases and a frequent deterioration in freshwater and coastal ecosystem services, including water quality, fisheries, and amenity value."<sup>299</sup></p> <p>"Most of the P accumulation is occurring in soils, which may then be eroded into freshwater systems, causing deterioration of ecosystem services."<sup>300</sup></p> <p>"In contrast to the issues associated with nutrient oversupply, there remain large parts of Earth, notably in Africa and Latin America, where harvesting without nutrient replacement has led to a depletion of soil fertility, with serious consequences for human nutrition and the environment"<sup>301</sup> (MA, 2005, p.333).</p>
<p><b>Global freshwater use</b></p>	
<p>"Global freshwater use is estimated to expand 10% from 2000 to 2010, down from a per decade rate of about 20% between 1960 and 2000. These rates reflect population growth, economic</p>	<p>"Four out of every five people live downstream of, and are served by, renewable freshwater services, representing 75% of the total supply."<sup>303</sup></p>

<sup>294</sup> <http://www.worldwatch.org/node/5950>

<sup>292</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.277.aspx.pdf>

<sup>295</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.281.aspx.pdf>

<sup>296</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.281.aspx.pdf>

<sup>297</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.281.aspx.pdf>

<sup>298</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.281.aspx.pdf>

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<sup>300</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.281.aspx.pdf>

<sup>301</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.281.aspx.pdf>

<p>development, and changes in water use efficiency.”<sup>302</sup></p>	<p>“Only about 15% live with relative water abundance.”<sup>304</sup></p> <p>“Water scarcity is a globally significant and accelerating condition for 1–2 billion people worldwide, leading to problems with food production, human health, and economic development.”<sup>305</sup></p> <p>“The annual burden of disease from inadequate water, sanitation, and hygiene totals 1.7 million deaths and the loss of at least 50 million healthy life years. Some 1.1 billion people lack access to safe drinking water and 2.6 billion lack access to basic sanitation”<sup>306</sup> (MA, 2005, p.167).</p>
<p><b>Change in land use, Deforestation</b></p>	
<p>“Conversion of forests and other ecosystems to agricultural land has occurred at an average rate of 0.8% yr<sup>-1</sup> over the past 40–50 years and is the major global driver behind loss of ecosystem functioning and services” (MEA 2005a)<sup>307</sup>.</p> <p>“In all regions of the humid tropics, deforestation is primarily the result of a combination of commercial wood extraction, permanent cultivation, livestock development, and the extension of overland transport infrastructure.”<sup>308</sup> (MA, 2005, p.76)</p> <p>“Urbanization provides another illustration of interactions. Though only about 2% of Earth’s land surface is covered by built up area, the effect of urban systems on ecosystems extends well beyond urban boundaries. Three processes of urban change appear to be of relevance for ecosystem change: the growth of urban population (urbanization), the growth of built-up area (urban growth), and the spreading of urban functions into the urban hinterland connected with a decrease in</p>	<p>“Nowadays, chances are that, no matter where you live on Earth, land acquisitions for mining, oil and gas might soon be at your door. This trend is now a major driver of land grabbing globally, and poses a significant threat to the world’s indigenous communities, farmers and local food production systems, as well as to precious water, forests, biodiversity, critical ecosystems and climate change.”<sup>313</sup></p> <p>“Mining does not only pose a challenge for the global South. The development of “fracking”—which involves the high-pressure injection of a toxic mix of chemicals into deposits of shale rock to release the natural gas trapped within—means that developers are now eager to target the large shale oil and gas deposits under North America and Europe.”<sup>314</sup></p> <p>“Deforestation and forest degradation affect 8.5% of the world’s remaining forests, nearly half of which are in South America.”<sup>315</sup> (MA,</p>

<sup>303</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.276.aspx.pdf>

<sup>302</sup> (<http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.276.aspx>.)

<sup>304</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.276.aspx.pdf>

<sup>305</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.276.aspx.pdf>

<sup>306</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.276.aspx.pdf>

<sup>307</sup> <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/>

<sup>308</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.272.aspx.pdf>

<p>the urban-rural gradient in population density, land prices, and so on (urban sprawl).<sup>309</sup> (MA, 2005, p.76)</p> <p>“Land acquisitions for mining, oil and gas”<sup>310</sup></p> <p>“Land grabs for mining, tourism, biofuels, dam construction, infrastructure projects, timber and now carbon trading are all part of the same process, turning farmers into refugees on their own land.”<sup>311</sup></p> <p>“The underlying stimulus to all this is, which governments and citizens have yet to adequately address is the thorny issue of Consumption”.<sup>312</sup></p>	<p>2005, p.75)</p> <p>“Approximately 10% of the drylands and hyper-arid zones of the world are considered degraded, with the majority of these areas in Asia. Cropped areas currently cover approximately 30% of Earth’s surface”<sup>316</sup> (MA, 2005, p.75).</p>
<b>Chemical Pollution</b>	
<p>“Primary types of chemical pollution include radioactive compounds, heavy metals, and a wide range of organic compounds of human origin. Chemical pollution adversely affects human and ecosystem health, which has most clearly been observed at local and regional scales but is now evident at the global scale”<sup>317</sup>.</p>	<p>“Chemical pollution adversely affects human and ecosystem health, which has most clearly been observed at local and regional scales but is now evident at the global scale. Our assessment on why chemical pollution qualifies as a planetary boundary rests on two ways in which it can influence Earth System functioning: (i) through a global, ubiquitous impact on the physiological development and demography of humans and other organisms with ultimate impacts on ecosystem functioning and structure and (ii) by acting as a slow variable that affects other planetary boundaries. For example, chemical pollution may influence the biodiversity boundary by reducing the abundance of species and potentially increasing organisms’ vulnerability to other stresses such as climate change (Jenssen 2006, Noyes et al. 2009). Chemical pollution also interacts with the climate-change boundary through the release and global spread of mercury from coal burning and from the fact that most industrial chemicals are currently produced from petroleum,</p>

<sup>313</sup> <http://www.gaiafoundation.org/sites/default/files/PandorasBoxReportFinal.pdf>

<sup>314</sup> <http://www.gaiafoundation.org/sites/default/files/PandorasBoxReportFinal.pdf>

<sup>315</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.272.aspx.pdf>

<sup>309</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.272.aspx.pdf>

<sup>310</sup> <http://www.gaiafoundation.org/sites/default/files/PandorasBoxReportFinal.pdf>

<sup>311</sup> <http://www.gaiafoundation.org/sites/default/files/PandorasBoxReportFinal.pdf>

<sup>312</sup> <http://www.gaiafoundation.org/sites/default/files/PandorasBoxReportFinal.pdf>

<sup>316</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.272.aspx.pdf>

<sup>317</sup> <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/>



	releasing CO <sub>2</sub> when they are degraded or incinerated as waste. There could be even more complex connections between chemical, biodiversity, and climate-change boundaries. For example, climate change will change the distributions of pests, which could lead to increased and more widespread use of pesticides” <sup>318</sup> .
<b>Ocean acidification</b>	
<p>“The uptake of anthropogenic carbon since 1750 has led to the ocean becoming more acidic with an average decrease in pH of 0.1 units. Increasing atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations lead to further acidification. Projections based on SRES scenarios give a reduction in average global surface ocean pH of between 0.14 and 0.35 units over the 21st century. While the effects of observed ocean acidification on the marine biosphere are as yet undocumented, the progressive acidification of oceans is expected to have negative impacts on marine shell-forming organisms (e.g. corals) and their dependent species”<sup>319</sup>.</p> <p>“The atmospheric removal process of CO<sub>2</sub> includes both dissolution of CO<sub>2</sub> into seawater, and the uptake of carbon by marine organisms. The ocean absorption of anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> is not evenly distributed spatially (Sabine et al. 2004) or temporally (Canadell et al. 2007). Addition of CO<sub>2</sub> to the oceans increases the acidity (lowers pH) of the surface seawater”<sup>320</sup>.</p>	<p>“Ocean acidification poses a challenge to marine biodiversity and the ability of oceans to continue to function as a sink of CO<sub>2</sub> (currently removing roughly 25% of human emissions)”<sup>321</sup>.</p> <p>“Ocean acidification may have serious impacts on coral reefs and associated ecosystems”<sup>322</sup>.</p> <p>This can contribute more to Climate Change and biodiversity loss (see effects of both) and directly affect to population related to these marine ecosystems.</p>
<b>Stratospheric Ozone depletion</b>	
<p>“Stratospheric ozone filters ultraviolet radiation from the sun. The appearance of the Antarctic ozone hole was a textbook example of a threshold in the Earth System being crossed—completely unexpectedly. A combination of increased concentrations of anthropogenic ozone-depleting substances (like chlorofluorocarbons) and polar stratospheric clouds moved the Antarctic stratosphere into a new regime: one in which ozone effectively disappeared in the lower</p>	<p>“This thinning of the Austral polar stratospheric ozone layer has negative impacts on marine organisms (Smith et al. 1992) and poses risks to human health. Although it does not appear that there is a similar threshold for global ozone, there is the possibility that global warming (which leads to a cooler stratosphere) could cause an increase in the formation of polar stratospheric clouds. Were this to happen in the Arctic region, it could trigger ozone holes over</p>

<sup>318</sup> <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/>

<sup>319</sup> [http://www.ipcc.ch/publications\\_and\\_data/ar4/syr/en/mains3-3-4.html](http://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/ar4/syr/en/mains3-3-4.html)

<sup>320</sup> <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/>

<sup>321</sup> <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/>

<sup>322</sup> <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/>

<p>stratosphere in the region during the Austral spring”.<sup>323</sup></p>	<p>the northern hemisphere continents, with potential impacts on populations there”<sup>324</sup>.</p> <p>“Fortunately, because of the actions taken as a result of the Montreal Protocol (and its subsequent amendments), we appear to be on a path that avoids transgression of this boundary”<sup>325</sup>.</p> <p>“On balance, the case of stratospheric ozone is a good example where concerted human effort and wise decision making seem to have enabled us to stay within a planetary boundary”<sup>326</sup>.</p>
<p><b>Human activities since the pre-industrial era have doubled the global concentration of most aerosols</b></p>	
<p>“Human activities since the pre-industrial era have doubled the global concentration of most aerosols (Tsigaridis et al. 2006)”.<sup>327</sup></p>	<p>“We consider atmospheric aerosol loading as an anthropogenic global change process with a potential planetary boundary for two main reasons:</p> <p>(i) the influence of aerosols on the climate system and (ii) their adverse effects on human health at a regional and global scale.”<sup>328</sup></p>
<p><b>Human population growth</b></p>	
<p>“Global population doubled in the past 40 years and increased by 2 billion people in the last 25 years, reaching 6 billion in 2000. Developing countries have accounted for most population growth in the past quarter-century, but there is now an unprecedented diversity of demographic patterns across regions and countries. Some high-income countries such as the United States are still experiencing high rates of population growth, while some developing countries such as China, Thailand, North Korea, and South Korea have very low rates.</p> <p>Urban areas now contain about half the world’s</p>	<p>“Within the Holocene environment we have propelled ourselves to a world economy hosting seven billion people committed to nine billion by 2050. Before the beginning of the Holocene, human numbers were much lower and we existed in hunter-gatherer societies only.”<sup>330</sup></p> <p>“Despite the population growth just described, average income per person almost doubled during this period. However, dramatic regional variations in per capita income growth existed. As per capita income grows, the structure of</p>

<sup>323</sup> <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/>

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<sup>328</sup> <http://www.ecologyandsociety.org/vol14/iss2/art32/>

population yet cover less than 3% of the terrestrial surface. Regional rates of urbanization vary widely. High-income countries typically have populations that are 70–80% urban. Some developing-country regions, such as parts of Asia, are still largely rural, while Latin America, at 75% urban, is indistinguishable from high-income countries in this regard.”<sup>329</sup>

consumption changes, with wide-ranging potential for effects on ecosystem condition and services. With rising per capita incomes, the share of additional income spent on food declines and the consumption of industrial goods and services rises. The composition of people's diets changes, with less consumption of starchy staples (rice, wheat, potatoes) and more of fat, meat, fish, fruits, and vegetables.”<sup>331</sup>

## **Appendix 2: ICSA The Braided Way paper 2013**

See accompanying file: *3. ICSA The Braided Way paper 2013.pdf*

## **Appendix 3: Bolivia - World Work Poster**

See accompanying file: *3. Bolivia - world work poster copy.pdf*

## **Appendix 4: Bolivia outline DED MEMORIA Entrenamiento mujeres**

See accompanying file: *4. Bolivia outline DED MEMORIA Entrenamiento mujeres #0 copy – 2009.pdf*

## **Appendix 5: Bolivian organisational review - Cartilla AOPEB**

See accompanying file: *5. Bolivian organisational review - Cartilla AOPEB FINAL.pdf*

## **Appendix 6: Feedback Summary - Zaragoza Lawyers 2012**

See accompanying file: *6. Feedback Summary - Zaragoza lawyers 2012.doc*

## **Appendix 7: Zaragoza Lawyers 2012 Feedback**

See accompanying file: *7. Zaragoza lawyers 2012 feedback.pdf*

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<sup>330</sup><http://lowres.stockholmresilience.org/research/researchnews/addressingsomekeymisconceptions.5.5d9ea857137d8960d471296.html>

<sup>329</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.272.aspx.pdf>

<sup>331</sup> <http://www.unep.org/maweb/documents/document.272.aspx.pdf>

## Appendix 8: Zaragoza Participants' Final Feedback

**Table 2: Final feedback from participants in Zaragoza course, 2010-2012**

Level of awareness and personal development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gaining a clearer picture of their inner landscape</li> <li>• Becoming conscious of playing roles</li> <li>• Becoming aware of the possibility to play various roles</li> <li>• Discovering previously unknown inner boundaries/limits</li> <li>• Increased tolerance, respect and flexibility towards other people's views/perspectives (through discovering own prejudices and projections)</li> <li>• Gaining an understanding of having developed a lot during the course but that the course is also a starting point.</li> <li>• Gaining an interest in personal development</li> <li>• Losing the fear of conflict—seeing it as something positive</li> <li>• Realising that showing emotions is not a sign of weakness</li> </ul>
Greater connection with your purpose or life direction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seeing conflict as a positive living thing</li> <li>• Gaining awareness of the interconnectedness of all things</li> <li>• Greater sense of trust, confidence, security, safety</li> <li>• Developed more capacity for personal and professional challenges (not many specifics here—more a sense of being more confident?)</li> <li>• Greater respect towards others</li> <li>• Connecting with people in a more open, intense way</li> <li>• Improved self-esteem /assertiveness (a few)</li> </ul>
Difference compared to other facilitation courses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Practical exercises were included (and the quality and quantity of these)</li> <li>• Teaching method—combination of theory, examples and a lot of practice and personal participation</li> <li>• Emphasis on identifying the individual's unconscious/conscious influence on the process</li> <li>• A professional course, but included far more personal inner work than usual—far more focus on heart and emotions</li> <li>• Inner work and constant personal development were necessary</li> <li>• Strong group connection achieved</li> <li>• Complete coherence between theory and practice</li> <li>• The space and respect given to voluntary participation in activities</li> </ul>

## **Appendix 9: Awakening Leadership 1 - Handbook 2011**

See accompanying file: *9. Awakening Leadership 1. Handbook 2011.pdf*

## **Appendix 10: Awakening Leadership 2 - Handbook 2012**

See accompanying file: *10. Awakening Leadership 2 handbook 2012.pdf*

**Please note:** All appendices are available on request from the Author.

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